# A MUNICIPAL HISTORY

# OF THE BOROUGH OF SAYREVILLE

JOSEPH·T·KARCHER

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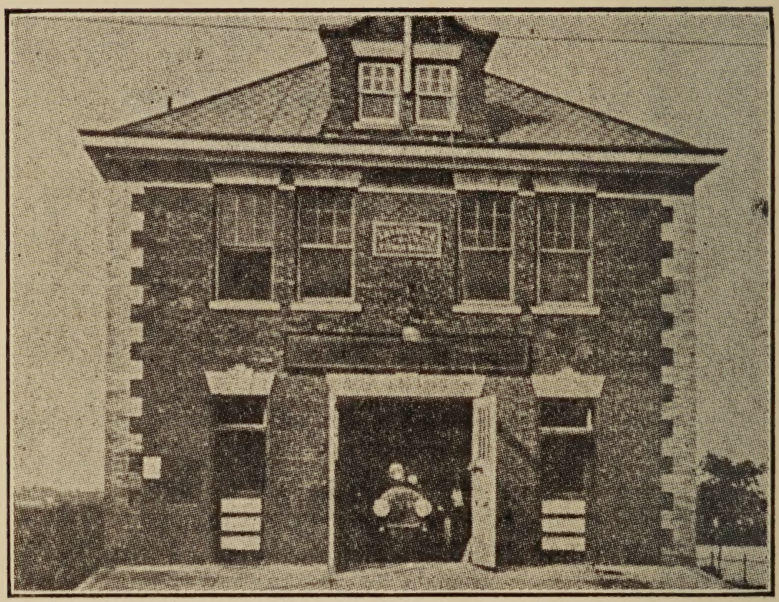
To Jon Boon
a fellow historian
with the compliments
of the author

# A MUNICIPAL HISTORY OF THE BOROUGH OF SAYREVILLE 1920–1958



MUNICIPAL BUILDING FROM 1909 TO 1942.

# A MUNICIPAL HISTORY OF THE BOROUGH OF SAYREVILLE 1920 - 1958

By
JOSEPH T. KARCHER, LL.B.

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# PREFACE

A few years ago I wrote a Municipal History of Sayreville Township (1876 to 1920). It is now long out of print. However, from the few nearby libraries which still have copies available have come reports that it continues to attract the attention of those interested in historical subjects and Americana in general.

I have long felt that the task I had undertaken would not be complete until the history of this community was brought down to date. Hence this present volume. In it I endeavor to pick up the threads where the Township went out of existence and the Borough was born. In the following pages is a fairly accurate and authentic digest or synopsis of events abstracted from the official minutes and other records of the municipality.

To some, the recording of many of these incidents may seem to constitute little more than trivia. It may be that I could not successfully defend much of the material against this charge. And yet, it happens that these occurrences form the very warp and woof of the average American community and will probably continue to do so. It is the lot of few—very few—communities to attain even statewide prominence or preeminence, much less national or worldwide acclaim. And in those rare instances when they do, it is not infrequently due to some crime or tragedy which occurred within its boundaries. This is indeed a high price to pay for public recognition. Fortunately, Sayreville has no such history to record—and frankly its people are grateful for that fact.

But the history of the Borough of Sayreville is not without its significant incidents. Its activities more or less parallel those of thousands of other communities of similar size and characteristics. And yet, that is precisely what makes up the history of the county, the state, the nation and the world. The period covered embraces the so-called "roaring twenties", the great depression, the "New Deal", the days of the alphabetical agencies, including W.P.A. and P.W.A., etc., World War II, the Korean conflict, the "Cold War," the dawn of the atomic age, etc.

It seems to me that even the modest part our local officials played in guiding the destinies of their home community is deserving of examination, analysis and permanent recording. It is a record of men who sought to serve their fellow men through service in elective or appointive public office. In many instances, they rendered these services at substantial personal sacrifice. And by such service they brought to their fellow townsmen the benefits of what we have come to call a democratic form of government. It seems to me therefore that for these services they deserve the thanks and appreciation of their fellow citizens. To the extent that the residents have received good government at the local level, they owe it to these men.

I make no claim that these public officials were always right. In retrospect they may not appear to have been infallible. But it is well to bear in mind that hindsight is always much easier than foresight. None of us are omnicient. The most we can hope for is to achieve a median or average "batting average". I submit that a perusal of the records which follows should persuade the impartial reader that Sayreville has enjoyed a fairly high degree of good local govern-

ment during its years as a Borough. We can only hope that she will be equally fortunate in the years which lie ahead.

I cannot close this preface without a special word of thanks to former Borough Clerk, Frank P. Kolb, who read, analyzed and digested the minutes covering a period of almost forty years in order to assist me in this work. My thanks, too, go to two of my secretaries Ella Whitson and Edna Cornell for their excellent work in taking the dictation, transcribing their notes, typing up the manuscript and proofreading the copy in between their regular duties. I am frank to confess that without their patient and devoted service this work would not have been possible.

Sayreville, N. J.

Respectfully submitted,
JOSEPH T. KARCHER.

# FOREWORD

By Joseph J. Weber, Borough Treasurer

I have been invited to contribute a brief Foreword to this volume. I consider this a compliment and am indeed happy to comply.

Joseph J. Weber

I know of no one better qualified for the task of writing a municipal history of the Borough of Sayreville than the author. While somewhat younger than I, he has spent almost thirty years of his very active life in one form or another of public service at practically all levels of government. These include service as local Magistrate or Judge of the Police Court; Borough Attorney; Deputy Surrogate of Middlesex County and three years' service in the State Legislature.

While his interest in local municipal government began some ten years after my initial entry upon the scene, he has made a much more thorough study of it

than I have. In my position of Borough Collector and Treasurer, I have been brought into almost daily contact with him in connection with municipal affairs. I, therefore, have had the opportunity of observing him at close range. His deep interest in and his comprehensive grasp of municipal government and its many complicated and involved problems has always been a source of amazement and admiration to me. Nor has his understanding of public affairs been limited to purely legal questions. On the contrary it has extended to practically every facet of local government. It is safe to say that few men in the community have won and kept the respect and confidence of both elected and appointed municipal officials over so long a period of time.

Many of these officials would probably be glad to admit that they have leaned heavily upon his astute advice and guidance—not only in the field of law but in many other phases of government, and more important still that as a result thereof they were enabled to give to the people of Sayreville a higher and better type of municipal government than they might otherwise have been able to accomplish.

It is with this background that the author has written this history, and for that reason it seems to me that he has been able to compose a keen and discerning commentary on the passing local scene. I have found it clear, concise, comprehensive and authentic. The author has found much to record in this book. I feel confident that those who read it will draw from it a deeper understanding of both the community and the author.

Finally, I am afraid that it might be considered immodest of me if I were not to disclaim some of the kind things the author has said about me and the ad-

ministration of my office as Borough Collector and Treasurer. Frankly, he has always been more than generous in his appraisal of my humble efforts. I am grateful to him for his evaluation of my work and I shall at least continue to try to merit this commendation as far as I possibly can.

JOSEPH J. WEBER.

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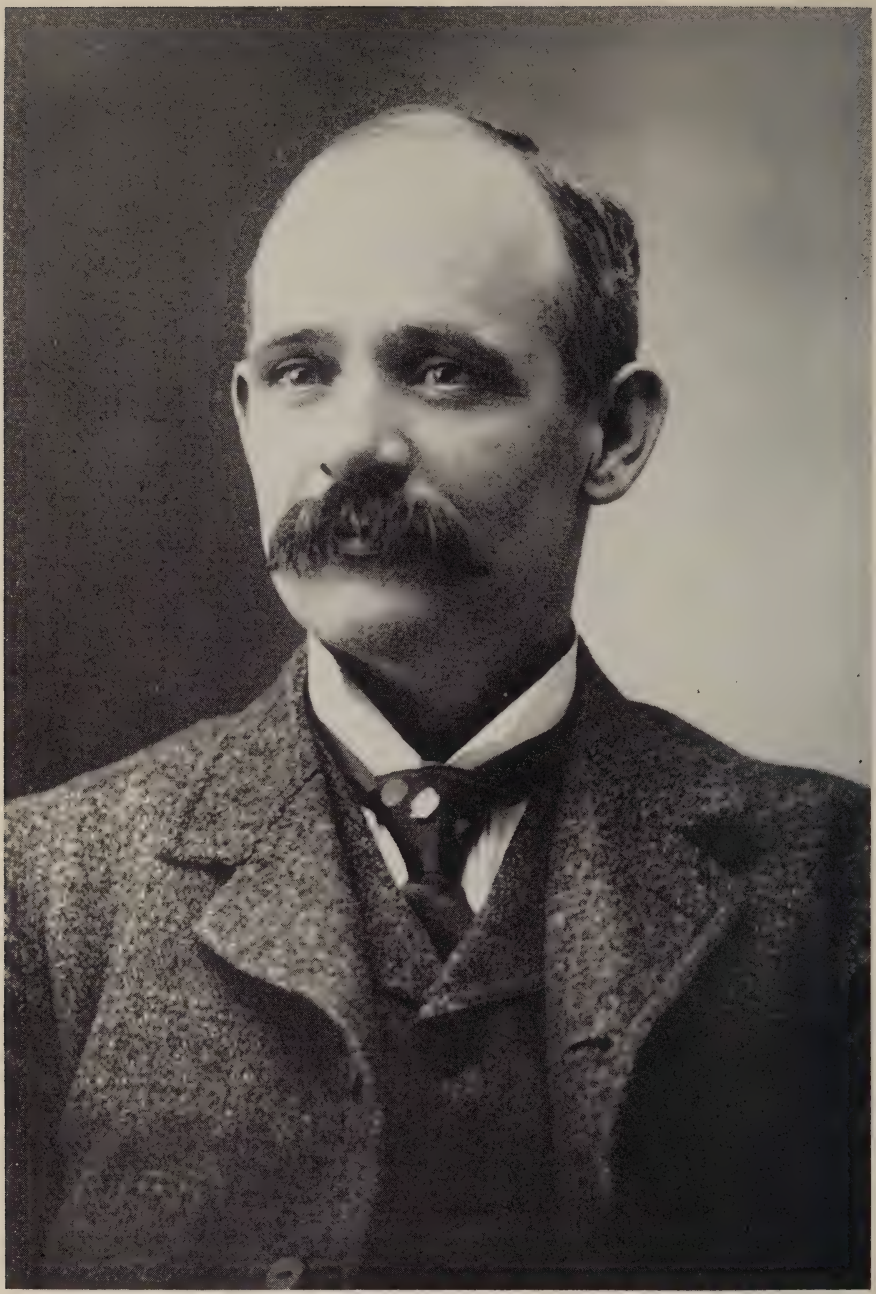


MAYOR JOHN J. QUAID—1920 and 1921.

# A Muncipal History of the Borough of Sayreville 1920 - 1958

## Chapter I

## QUAID SERVES AS FIRST MAYOR— 1920 and 1921

### 1920

*Sayreville Becomes Borough*

The Borough of Sayreville began its official existence with the usual Organization Meeting held in the Municipal Building on January 1, 1920.

It had been preceded by a vigorous and sometimes bitter campaign first in the Primary Election and reaching its climax at the General Election in the preceding November.

In the primaries John J. Quaid competed with J. Henry Boehm for the Democratic nomination for Mayor. The records do not indicate who the Republican candidate for Mayor was in the General Election, but the Democratic nominee John J. Quaid won election as the first Mayor of the newly created Borough.

*Council Has Hassle*

Taking office with him was a bi-partisan Council. The Republicans were represented by William J. Betzler and Edwin F. Lockhart. The Democratic Councilmen were Frank Hartman, Charles Engelhardt, Carl F. Bossong and Edward E. Meeker. This political set up would normally have resulted in giving the Mayor assurance of having his appointments confirmed. However, some of his four Democratic colleagues frequently differed with him on matters of policy. The result was the rather disputatious series of meetings of the governing body before the internal differences in the party in power were eventually ironed out.

Among the other municipal officers who also took office on the first day of the year was Tax Collector Joseph J. Kupsch and Tax Assessor Abraham Fiehle, who had been elected to these offices. Edwin F. Lockhart served as temporary Borough Clerk at the organization meeting. He was succeeded a week later by Joseph J. Weber, who was confirmed as the first Borough Clerk. Thomas H. Hagerty, prominent New Brunswick attorney, was confirmed as Borough Attorney. The appointment of the Tice Engineering Company as the municipal engineers was laid over for further consideration.

*Board of Health Created*

One of the first functions of the newly formed governing body was the creation of a Board of Health and the appointment of five men to serve as members. The first Board consisted of a group of some of the leading citizens in the community, including: Hugh Singleton,

Frederick Davis, Benjamin Gorman, Edwin Cordes and Patrick F. McCutcheon.

At the Organization Meeting the governing body were advised that the referendum on the installation of the water system had been approved. The Mayor was also authorized to act as the Municipal Recorder, now known as Magistrate.

The salaries paid the various officers offer an interesting contrast with the prevailing remuneration after two world wars and more than ten years of inflation. The Borough Clerk's salary was $600. per year; the Collector's $1,200.; Assessor's $500.; Attorney's $1,000.; Recorder's $300. and the Overseer of the Poor $250.

These modest expenditures account in part, at least, for the fact that the annual budget for the first year of Borough operation totalled only $51,125. This was less than $4,000. higher than the last year the Borough had operated as a Township.

The rift between the Mayor and his Democratic colleagues became self-evident at the first meeting in February when a number of municipal positions remained unfilled because of a lack of majority vote to confirm them. At this meeting the Mayor nominated the Tice Engineering Company for Borough Engineer; Thomas Ryan for Supervisor of Roads and George W. Taylor as Recorder; all of which nominations failed of passage.

### *Lehman Effective Magistrate*

As a matter of fact, it was not until May that Jacob Weischadle was confirmed as Fire Warden and not until June 2nd that Henry Lehman managed to secure the requisite votes to confirm his appointment as Re-

corder. Lehman, while a layman and not versed in the law, proved to be a rather effective Magistrate. He ruled his court with an iron hand and although his decisions might have been considered somewhat strict and arbitrary at times, they were seldom reversed by an upper court. He continued to function in this position, with the exception of a brief interlude while the Republicans were in control, until his death in 1929 when he was succeeded by the author.

*State Board of Health Approves Plans*

Meanwhile, the prominent New York Engineering Firm headed by Walter S. Coulter (retained in Township days), continued with its work of preparing working plans and specifications for the installation of a comprehensive sewer and water program in the Borough. Notice of approval by the State Board of Health of its plans was given the governing body on May 19th.

*Contract for Preparation of Tax Map Awarded*

At the second meeting in June it was evident that the governing body was still involved with the question of who should prepare a Tax Map. At this meeting bids were submitted for the preparation of a Tax Map, and over the protest of the Mayor were referred to the Road Committee. On July 7th contract for the preparation of a Tax Map was awarded to Raymond P. Wilson, prominent New Brunswick Civil Engineer. But no funds were provided for the work and it was not started until years later.

*Alignment of Deerfield Road Established*

The solution of a long pending dispute about Deerfield Road seemed headed for settlement when Engineer Fred Simons reported to the Council on September 1st that a conference had been held by Messrs. Whitehead, Fisher and Quaid and they had agreed on the alignment of this much disputed roadway. It is generally understood by historians that Deerfield Road was an old Indian Trail which had been used by the Indians in their travels from the Navesinks in Monmouth County to the northern parts of the State and that the Raritan River was forded where River Street presently ends at this stream.

*"Firsts"*

The official records indicate a number of "firsts" for the newly created municipality. The first street light contract was awarded. The first storm sewer was installed on Washington Road from Hensler's Lane to the South River Bridge and plans were approved for straightening the alignment of various sections of Main Street.

It appears that South Amboy apparently was still making efforts to annex some part of thte Borough, because a Mass Meeting was held at the Liberty Theatre on October 6th to protest any such annexation.

And to prove that the Borough was really advancing as any progressive municipality should, the records indicate that an ordinance was adopted on August 18th to control the running at large of horses, cows and other cattle within the confines of the community.

## 1921

*Hectic Year Commences*

The year 1921 was also a hectic year in the Borough's history. The community was obviously suffering from growing pains. The fact that there was a lack of harmony between the Mayor and his Democratic colleagues on the governing body was again apparent at the organization meeting which was held as usual on January 1st.

*Council Evenly Divided*

The only change in the official family was the appearance of Republican Alfred G. Zeller who was elected at the general elections in the preceding November to replace Democrat Carl F. Bossong. The Republican holdovers were Betzler and Lockhart, while the Democratic holdovers were Councilmen Hartman, Englehardt and Meeker with whom the Mayor had had frequent disagreements in the preceding year over appointments. Thus the governing body was evenly divided between Republicans and Democrats with the Mayor having the balance of power.

*Quaid Presents Progressive Program*

In his second annual message Mayor Quaid recommended among other items a revision of the Police rules and regulations, the assigning of house numbers and the erection of street signs and again pointed out the importance of an up-to-date Tax Map. That the governing body gave his recommendations respectful

attention is evidenced by the fact that at least some of them were put into effect during the year.

The Mayor had apparently developed some disagreement with Borough Attorney Thomas H. Hagerty because he failed to nominate him for reappointment on New Year's Day. However, he was held over under the provisions of the Statutes and in due course after the expiration of 30 days was appointed by the Council.

*Budget Increases*

The principal business at the first meeting in February was the adoption of the annual budget which amounted to $59,675.00. This represented an increase of about $5,000 over the preceding year and reflected a natural growth in the Borough.

At the March 16th meeting the transition of Washington Road into a heavily travelled artery of traffic first became evident when a complaint was filed by Mr. William Albert, Sr., respecting the traffic, which was referred to the Police Committee for attention.

*Polling Places Increased*

Further evidence of the Borough's growth was indicated at the April 27th meeting when the Council had before it a recommendation that the polling places be increased from 1 to 5. After various conferences the following locations were eventually recommended to and approved by the Board of Elections on July 20th:

Poll No. 1—Lincoln School, Washington Road;
Poll No. 2—Borough Hall, Main Street;

Poll No. 3—Washington School, Lower Main Street;

Poll No. 4—Temporary Public School on the north side of Deerfield Road in the Parlin section, later known as the Parlin YMCA and Parlin Club House; and

Poll No. 5—Private home of Harry Davis on the west side of Branch Turnpike near the South Amboy border.

The need for this increase in polling places was evidenced by the fact that the community now had a registered vote of 2356 and the records indicate that 1509 voters went to the polls to cast their ballots in 1921.

*Residents Unanimously Approve Sewer and Water System*

Probably one of the most picturesque meetings of the year was that of May 18th which was adjourned to May 31st so it could be held at the Liberty Theatre as a mass meeting to which the entire populace was invited. The governing body had before it the comprehensive plans of W. S. Coulter, consulting engineer which envisioned a sewer and water system for the built-up section of the Borough. Ordinances had been prepared which would make these proposals a reality. Before proceeding with this project which involved a substantial sum well over a million dollars, the governing body apparently sought an expression of popular opinion from the residents as a whole. Those in attendance at the meeting indicated their wholehearted approval by a unanimous vote. The governing body thereupon proceeded with the project.

At the July 6th meeting, the record indicates that

the governing body proceeded with the reorganization of the Police Department and the adoption of new rules and regulations as recommended by Mayor Quaid. The Police force at that time consisted of one Chief Marshal and 5 regular marshals.

*Melrose Hose and Chemical Company Incorporates*

In November it appears that a group of residents of Melrose petitioned for the incorporation of the Melrose Hose and Chemical Co. This additional company was felt necessary in order to provide adequate fire protection for the Melrose Section of the Borough which was located from 3 to 4 miles from Fire Headquarters, which was located in the Municipal Building on Main Street.

*Prominent Citizens in Sayreville Hose Company*

At the November 16th meeting the Council received and approved the list of regular members of the Sayreville Hose Co. The names of the members sound like a Who's Who of the early pioneers who settled the community and included the following: Noel E. Bissett, John Baron, Alfred Bauman, Carl Bossong, Charles Buchanan, Paul C. Check, Albert Chevalier, George Clapp, Rudolph Drager, Peter Evanovich, William Ferhle, George H. Feaster, George Gross, John B. Hart, Jr., Andrew Hahn, Charles Holsworth, August Janicker, Elias P. Jensen, Frank Keenan, Frank Kolb, Otto Krug, Joseph Lang, Frank Lapa, Paul Lochs, Charles Martin, John Masur, Charles Maxien, Jr., Joseph Meade, Joseph Meyer, Fred Mayer, Richard Meyer, Emil Miller, Daniel O'Connell, George Popp, William Rackenback, William

Rohde, Richard Rohde, Adolph Schmitt, Richard Schwarzenberg, Edward Weck, John Weck, Otto Weck, James Weischadle, Richard Weischadle, Fred Werner, Alfred G. Zeller and Rufus Weischadle.

*John J. Quaid Dynamic Controversial Figure*

In retrospect the first two years of the Borough's existence were exciting ones. Mayor Quaid had undoubtedly given the Borough government an aggressive leadership. Actually many of his staunchest supporters felt and still feel that he did more to make the Borough advance and prosper than most of his contemporaries. Even those who were hostile to him admitted that he was a man of many talents; that he had wide experience in governmental affairs; that he had not only served on the former Township Committee for a number of years but had also served in the State Legislature as far back as 1898 and 1899 where he made an enviable reputation for himself by the progressive legislation he had introduced. No doubt some of the conflicts which arose in the local government were due to his efforts to make the community progress at a faster pace than his colleagues on the governing body, both Democratic and Republican, thought advisable at this early stage in the Borough's development.

MAYOR EDWARD E. CLARK—1922 and 1923.

## Chapter II

# EDWARD CLARK SUCCEEDS QUAID AS MAYOR—1922 and 1923

## 1922

### *Clark's Regime Calm*

The organization meeting of the governing body held on January 2nd, 1922 was a calm and a peaceful affair compared to earlier organization meetings. Edward E. Clark had been elected Mayor at the preceding election, defeating Mayor Quaid in the primary. Elected with him were Democrat William B. Rohde, and Republican Joseph Bailey, Sr., replacing Engelhardt and Lockhart. Thus for the second successive year the membership of the governing body was evenly divided between the two major parties. Mayor Clark held the balance of power. Unlike his predecessor Mayor Quaid he received the support of his 3 Democratic colleagues on all appointments. These included Frank P. Kolb replacing Joseph J. Weber as Borough Clerk, Thomas H. Hagerty as Borough Attorney, Frederick F. Simons as Borough Engineer and Henry Lehman as Recorder. Joseph J. Kupsch continued as Collector and Abraham Fiehle as Assessor.

Mayor Clark's annual message was a brief one. Its principal recommendations were the erection of street signs and the reorganization of the Police Department.

At the January 18th meeting Benjamin Pawlowski

of the Melrose Section was appointed to the Board of Health.

*Budget Continues to Rise*

At the first meeting in February the annual budget was adopted amounting to $67,825.00. This was an increase of approximately $8,000.00 and again reflected the continued growth of the community.

In the first months of the year the continued growth and expansion of the Borough was evidenced by the official actions recorded. These included the installation of a storm sewer in Hensler's Lane, the approval of plans and specifications for curbing on both sides of Main Street from Miller's Corner to Blew's Hill, the acceptance of Kupsch and Haag Streets as public streets and the adoption of an ordinance approving the widening and straightening of Main Street from Blew's Hill to Burt's Creek.

*Police Department Reorganized*

On June 7th a formal ordinance was adopted reorganizing the Police Department and establishing rules and regulations. The set-up for the department therein provided has remained more or less intact throughout the ensuing years.

On July 5th Democratic Councilman Edward E. Meeker submitted his resignation as a Councilman because he was moving to Raritan Township. The resignation was accepted and at the first meeting in August Charles J. Englehardt was appointed to fill his vacancy.

*First Housing Development Approved*

In November a map covering additional sections of Wessco Realty Company was submitted for approval. This was Sayreville's first large scale housing development. The initial section had been approved in 1918 under the township form of government. Before the development was completed it had grown to 4 sections and embraced most of the Morgan and Bayview Manor sections of the community.

*Fortune Tellers Controlled*

As an indication that the governing body was alert to the activities of phrenologists who were alleged to have unusual psychic power in fortune telling and predicting one's future by the study of their cranium, etc., an ordinance to control such activities was introduced and adopted at the October meeting of the governing body.

An effort to incorporate Old Bridge as a separate community was defeated during the course of the year.

## 1923

*Kierst Commences Public Career*

Mayor Clark began his second year as Mayor on January 1, 1923. The only new face to appear on the Borough Council was that of John J. Kierst, Democrat, replacing William J. Betzler, Republican. Mr. Kierst was a life long resident of the Melrose Section and a plumbing contractor by trade. He later served as a member of and President of the Board of Health, as well as Plumbing Inspector until his death a few years ago.

All other appointive officials were reappointed, including Attorney Hagerty, Engineer Simon and Recorder Lehman.

New appointees included Michael Craven, Overseer of Poor. Mr. Craven had served in this post many years under the Township form of government and continued in the same capacity under the Borough form of government until his death. Conrad Albert was appointed Road Supervisor. Patrick F. McCutcheon and George Norman were appointed as members of the Board of Health and George Gross, Harry Olsen and Max Miller were appointed as Police Marshals.

*Borough Continues to Grow*

At the first meeting in February the Annual Budget for the year was introduced amounting to $71,875. showing a progressive but moderate increase in keeping with the population. The registered voters now totalled 2,763, of which 1,675 actually voted.

Mayor Clark's Second Annual Message recommended that Main Street be paved and that sidewalk and curb be installed. He also recommended an addition to the Borough Hall to meet expanding governmental activities.

In March the Fourth Section of Bay View Manor was approved, indicating that the expansion of this development continued.

In April, in conformity with the Mayor's recommendation, the Borough entered into contract with Middlesex County for the paving of Main Street at their joint expense.

*Utility Project Delayed*

Meanwhile the Borough was running into considerable difficulty in completing the installation of its Sanitary Sewer System. It appeared that J. R. Proctor, the initial contractor, was unable to complete the project and in April was notified to discontinue work. It thereupon assigned its contract to L. W. Carle, with the consent of the Borough and the Royal Indemnity Co., its bonding company. However, before the end of the year Carle was apparently also having difficulty in completing the project and was likewise notified to discontinue work, whereupon the Borough engaged Linus Gilbert to complete the project.

*Frischknecht and Rhatican Start Service*

On June 6th the official Minutes noted on its records the death of Fire Chief Joseph Meade. On June 20th the record noted the appointment of Jacob Frischknecht and John Crimmins as members of the Sayreville Police Force. Frischknecht was to continue service as a member of the force until his retirement more than thirty years later. However, Crimmins resigned on August 15th and was replaced by Officer John Rhatican. He, too, continued to serve the Borough as a Police Officer until his retirement more than thirty years later.

The continued progress and development of the community was noted in the approval on September 19th of plans for the installation of curbs on Ridgeway Avenue and Oak Street in the Borough of Sayreville.

## Chapter III

# HARTMAN WINS PROMOTION TO MAYOR—1924 and 1925

## 1924

### *Hartman Becomes Mayor*

The year 1924 marked the promotion of Councilman Frank Hartman to the post of Mayor. In anticipation of his induction into this higher office he had resigned as Councilman in the latter part of the preceding December. At the Organization Meeting on January 1, 1924 Thomas F. Dolan, Democrat, was appointed to succeed him. George K. Nickel, Republican, had been elected to the Council. He replaced Alfred G. Zeller, whose term had expired. Once again the Democrats held four of the Council seats to the Republican two.

Attorney Hagerty, Recorder Lehman and Road Superintendent Conrad Albert and Borough Clerk Frank P. Kolb were all reappointed. Dr. J. H. Beekman and Lee Forman were appointed to the Board of Health. The position of Borough Engineer was not filled at the Organization Meeting but late in March John Conlogue of South Amboy was appointed for a six months period.

In Mayor Hartman's First Message he recommended the establishment of a Water Department, the formal acceptance of streets by ordinance, the erection of appropriate street signs thereon and in-

MAYOR FRANK HARTMAN—1924 and 1925.

creased activity by the Board of Health to enforce the Sanitary Code in the Borough.

In February the Annual Budget of $74,199. was adopted. The post of Superintendent of the Water Department calling for an annual salary of $1,200. was created and Joseph J. Weber was appointed to this post.

*Dolan Returns*

The year 1924 marked the return of Thomas F. Dolan to the local political scene. He had previously served as postmaster for a number of years under appointment by President Wilson. After serving a short time as Councilman, he was elected Mayor of the Borough and served five successive terms, or a period of ten years. He then was electetd to the Board of Chosen Freeholders, the governing body for Middlesex County, and reelected for eight successive terms of three years, thus rounding out an extensive career devoted to the public service.

*Long-Awaited Gains Realized*

Signs of the Borough's progress were evident on all sides. The actual work of paving Main Street from Miller's Corner to Lower Sayreville had been let to the Utility Construction Company at a cost of about $90,000. as the dusty gravel road known as Main Street gave way to a modern paved thoroughfare. The Public Service Traction Company were realigning its tracks arranging for the installation of gas mains and map of Werner Heights covering the Borough's second housing development was approved. And the long

awaited comprehensive Sewer and Water System was finally approved.

Not only was the position of Water Superintendent created, but an ordinance establishing a Water Department and setting up rules and regulations was adopted; an ordinance to establish, equip and regulate a Fire Department was adopted; and the governing body even found time to give some attention to the regulation and licensing of pool rooms and bowling alleys.

### *Weber Assumes Position of Tax Collector and Treasurer*

In the latter part of the year Joseph J. Kupsch resigned as Tax Collector and Joseph J. Weber was promoted from his post in the Water Department to the position of Tax Collector and Treasurer. This was the beginning of a career as local Tax Collector and Treasurer which was to continue uninterrupted down to the present date, spanning a period of more than thirty three years. Mr. Weber's services in this post were so outstanding that, after having served as an elected official for upwards of twenty years or more, he was to be voted tenure of office by referendum of the people.

## 1925

### *Hartman Has Republican Controlled Council*

This year marked Frank Hartman's second year as Mayor. However, the General Election held in the preceding November had been unfavorable for the local Democrats. Two of the Democratic stalwarts,

Councilman William Rohde and Thomas F. Dolan had gone down to defeat at the hands of young John Shuler and John Winkler, Republican Candidates, who were practically new-comers in the field of politics. These, together with the two Republican holdover Councilmen, Joseph Bailey Sr. and George K. Nickel, were now in control of the Council for the first time since the incorporation of the Borough. The Democratic holdovers were Councilmen Engelhardt and Kierst.

At the Opening Meeting Mayor Hartman attempted to place in nomination all of the appointive officials who had served the preceding year. However, all the nominations were rejected by the Republican majority.

At the first regular meeting in January, on January 7th, in an extraordinary parliamentary maneuver the four Republican Councilmen walked out, leaving the governing body without a quorum to function. At the second regular meeting, on January 21st, Frank Hartman again submitted his list of nominations for appointment to office, all of which were again rejected.

### *G.O.P. Appointees Take Over*

At the first regular meeting in February, held on February 4th, the Republican majority on the Council took over control of all appointments. By a resolution, the following positions were filled: Frederick Richardson, prominent New Brunswick Attorney as Borough Attorney to replace Thomas H. Hagerty; Frank Doeler, local Brickyard Superintendent, to replace Henry Lehman as Recorder. Later in the month, Fred C. Schneider, New Brunswick Engineer, was appointed to replace the Democratic appointee as Engineer. Moreover, the rules of order were amended by the

Council to give the Republican majority a stronger grip on filling the various committees. The Annual Budget, of course, was adopted in due course, appropriating $96,192.36. This represented another gradual increase in the cost of government, as heretofore. But the community was growing, as evidenced by the increase in the registered voters, to 2,757 and in the votes cast to 1,749.

*Richardson Is Prominent Republican Leader*

Incidentally, Frederick Richardson was one of the outstanding attorneys in Middlesex County and a recognized leader in the Republican Party. He had been County Counsel for the Board of Chosen Freeholders and continued to serve in that capacity until 1930. Later, he was elected as a City Commissioner of New Brunswick and served that city for a time as its Mayor. He had won a reputation as being an authority on municipal and county government.

*Baumann and Visneiski Appointed*

On March 4th, Alfred Baumann's election as Chief of the Fire Department was confirmed by the Mayor and Council. At the June 17th meeting Attorney Richardson was authorized by resolution to institute suit against John R. Proctor, L. W. Carle and their bonding company for an alleged loss suffered by the Borough by reason of their default on their contract for the construction of the Sanitary Sewer System in the Borough. In July, Police Officer Russell Sprague was succeeded by John Visneiski. Visneiski was assigned to Motorcycle Patrol, together with Officer Frischknecht. These two officers were familiar sights on the Sayre-

ville highways and byways for the next fifteen years or more and until the use of motorcycles for patrol work was discarded in favor of the modern-day prowl cars. The governing body wound up the year by retaining the services of William H. Boylan, New Brunswick Architect, to prepare plans and specifications for the Melrose Fire House.

## Chapter IV

## DOLAN'S TERMS COVER FOUR PRE-DEPRESSION YEARS—1926 to 1929

### 1926

*Dolan Begins Able Administration*

This year marked the commencement of Thomas F. Dolan's ten successive years as Mayor. His first message indicated that he had made a thorough study of the problems at hand and outlined many recommendations in his Message. These included economy in budget expenditures; substitution of permanent paving for gravelled streets; urging of the Freeholders to pave Main Street from T. Ryan's residence to Deep Cut Bridge; equal distribution of street lights; installation of gas mains throughout Borough and many other projects.

*Republicans Again Control Council*

The preceding general election in November had witnessed the election of George L. Blew, a Republican as Councilman and Noel E. Bissett, a Democrat as Councilman, each for three full year terms. This resulted in the Republicans again in control of the Council for the second time since the creation of the Borough. The other Republican Councilmen were Joseph Bailey, Sr., George K. Nickel and John Winkler. The holdover Democratic Councilman was John J. Kierst.

MAYOR THOMAS F. DOLAN—1926 to 1935.

This meant that the Republicans could organize the Council, select the committees and designate the appointees with their four votes. This they proceeded to do. The new appointments were as follows: Frederick Richardson, Borough Attorney, A. T. McMichael, Borough Engineer, Franz Doeler, Recorder and Charles E. Gildersleeve, Superintendent of the Water Department. However, they were non-partisan in their reappointment of Frank P. Kolb as Borough Clerk and Michael Craven as Overseer of the Poor. E. J. Baumann and P. F. McCutcheon were appointed members of the Board of Health.

*Voters Favor Bi-Partisan Representation*

Incidentally, the preceding general election had witnessed many changes. Veteran Councilman Frank Hartman and Charles Engelhardt did not choose to run. Nor did John Shuler seek reelection. However, Joseph J. Weber was elected Tax Collector for a full 3 year term as a Democrat, while Abraham Feihle was elected for a full 3 year term to fill the post of Tax Assessor as a Republican. It appears that the electorate in Sayreville were still showing that they were not only non-partisan and independent but they favored bi-partisan representation in their governmental affairs.

The meetings in January were devoted to preparation of the budget and on January 20th it was adopted on final reading in the amount of $118,417.10. This represented an increase over the preceding year's budget of $22,224.74.

*Distinguished Men in Public Office*

It would appear that the Democratic members of the Council were somewhat disconsolate about being in the minority because the records indicate that they did not show up for the first meeting in February, the membership consisting solely of the solid Republican block. Incidentally, it may be of interest to give the background of some of the members of the governing body. The unusual career of Mayor Dolan has heretofore been reviewed briefly. George L. Blew was for many years one of the chief accountants and the comptroller of the Sayre & Fisher Brick Company. Noel E. Bissett was engaged in the business of plumbing contractor as was John J. Kierst. Joseph Bailey, Sr., had been an employee of August Rohde, local tavern owner and soft drink manufacturer, for many years. George K. Nickel was the employment manager and service manager for the E. I. DuPont Company in Parlin for many years.

At the May meeting a resolution was adopted indicating that the Borough had finally settled its claim for the default of the general contractor in the installation of the sewer system by collecting $33,500.00 from their Bonding Company.

*Victory Bridge Dedicated—New Fire Companies Organized*

On June 24th, by action of the governing body, a half holiday was declared to provide for the proper observance of the dedication of the newly constructed Victory Bridge across the Raritan River.

There continued to be many evidences of the growth and progress of the Borough. Melrose and Morgan

were clamoring for the installation of gas lines. The Melrose Hose and Chemical Company had not only been organized and recognized but had persuaded the governing body to build them a fire house in the Melrose Section. The residents of the Morgan Section quickly followed suit. A group of volunteers were organized, land was leased for use as a fire house and the group were urging the governing body for formal recognition.

*Additional Housing Developments Commenced*

Plans and specifications were approved for curbing and sidewalks on Lower Main Street and requests were coming in from the residents of Dane and Smullen Streets for the establishment of grades for the same purpose. Reinhart and Kurosky were developing President Park, the Borough's third development. Maps were offered for approval covering Seacroft Terrace and Deegan Manor, two additional small housing developments. The registered vote now was 2757 and the votes actually cast were 1850.

*Ex-Mayor Clark Dies*

The year, however, closed on a note of sadness. Ex-Mayor Edward E. Clark died suddenly and on December 22, 1926 the Mayor and Council adopted a formal resolution extolling his civic virtues and extending sympathy to his bereaved family.

## 1927

*Republicans Continue Control of Council*

This year marked Thomas F. Dolan's second year

as Mayor. The Republicans on the Council again had the majority made up of Councilmen Joseph Bailey, Sr., George Blew, George K. Nickel and John Winkler. The holdover Democrat was Noel E. Bissett. One Democratic Councilman replaced another, when John Lapa was elected and took Councilman Kierst's place on the governing body. Mayor Dolan submitted his Second Annual Message to the governing body. In it he included recommendations that increased effort be made to obtain state aid for Borough roads; that an effort be made to persuade the Public Service to install gas lines throughout the Borough; that the governing body acquire additional land adjacent to the Borough Hall for expansion of municipal facilities and that every effort be made to secure free mail delivery throughout the Borough.

At the Organization Meeting held on January 1st, George K. Nickel was elected as President of the Council and most of the Republican appointees were reappointed. These included Borough Attorney Frederick Richardson and Engineer A. T. McMichael and Superintendent of Sewer and Water Department, Charles Gildersleeve and Recorder Frank Doeler. However, two Democratic office holders were continued in office, namely, Overseer of the Poor Michael Craven and Frank P. Kolb, who was now under tenure of office. Joseph Weber and Abraham Feihle continued in their elective positions of Tax Collector and Tax Assessor, respectively.

*New Fire Trucks Purchased—Rohde Dies*

The Republican majority began the year by authorizing the Clerk to advertise for the purchase of two new fire trucks at the first meeting in January. They

were subsequently purchased for slightly over $4,000. each. Today the same type vehicle costs approximately $20,000. or more. The Annual Budget was adopted, amounting to $110,466.50. The registered voters in the Borough had increased to 2,837 and the votes cast were indicated at 1,787.

On February 2nd Sayreville joined the State League of Municipalities and has remained a member of this organization down to date.

On February 16th the governing body took formal notice of the passing of August Rohde, prominent local merchant and former member of the Township Committee.

At the May meeting the engineer was authorized to prepare plans and specifications for sidewalks and curbs on Boehmhurst Avenue.

*Power and Light Companies Consolidate and Build*

1927 was definitely a year which presaged great changes in the municipality. On June 15th the governing body received notice of the merger of the Eastern New Jersey Power Company with the small local utility company heretofore operated by the Sayre & Fisher Brick Company under the name Sayreville Power and Light Company. The brick company had been acquired by a large electric utility syndicate in Chicago. They had purchased the entire brick manufacturing business primarily for the purpose of acquiring the small utility company which it operated. It was about this time that the Eastern New Jersey Power Company began the construction of the huge electric generating plant on the Raritan River at the westerly tip of Crab Island. This generating plant was soon enlarged to double its initial capacity and within

the next twenty-five years it had quadrupled in capacity. In so doing it had become one of the principal sources of tax revenue to the Borough and a source of employment for a number of its residents. It is now known as the Jersey Central Power & Light Company.

*Tax Map Preparation Authorized*

In August, Engineer McMichael was authorized to prepare the Borough's first Tax Map at an estimated cost of $7,100. It was not until five years later, on October 6, 1932, that the Tax Map was completed and approved by J. H. Thayer Martin, New Jersey Tax Commissioner, and placed in operation by the Assessor and Collector.

At the second meeting in September, map of Marome Realty Company, a local realty development embracing Journee Mill Road, Bissett Street and Furman Avenue, was approved and filed.

*Abolition of Trolleys Opposed*

This was the period when the use of trolley cars as a means of transportation was rapidly giving way to the use of motor busses throughout the state. However, local residents did not take to this transition kindly. A petition containing 438 names was filed with the governing body on October 19th. Based thereon, the governing body instructed its Counsel to file a complaint with the New Jersey Board of Public Utility Commissioners protesting the substitution of buses for trolleys. The hearing was adjourned from time to time and was still pending at the year's end.

## 1928

### *Democrats Regain Control*

This year marked the beginning of Mayor Dolan's second term of office as Mayor. It likewise marked a change in the political complexion of the governing body, from Republican control to Democratic control. This was effected by the election of Frank Hartman and J. Henry Boehm, Democrats, to replace Joseph Bailey and John Winkler, Republicans. For both Democrats it represented a return to the political arena. Hartman had previously served as Township Committeeman, Councilman and Mayor. J. Henry Boehm had served as Township Clerk and Township Committeeman and had sought the nomination for Mayor in 1919 Primaries.

The remaining members of the governing body were: George L. Blew and George K. Nickel, now constituting the Republican minority on the governing body and John Lapa and Noel E. Bissett holdover Democrats. Noel E. Bissett was elected President of the Council. A. T. McMichael was retained as Borough Engineer but Fred Richardson, New Brunswick attorney, was replaced by George L. Burton of South River.

### *Weck Achieves Tenure*

At the Organization Meeting on January 1st Michael Creamer and Hugh Singleton were appointed members of the Board of Health. Edward Bailey was nominated to succeed Otto Weck as Inspector of the Water and Sewer Department. However, Weck, through his attorney, Joseph Edgar, claimed tenure

both as an ex-serviceman and an ex-fireman and on January 4th Attorney Burton gave a formal legal opinion supporting this contention and the Mayor withdrew the proposed appointment of Bailey.

At the January 11th meeting Fire Chief Frank Kosh reported that the total fire damage in the community in the preceding year was $23,700.

*Slight Increase in Budget*

In February the Annual Budget was adopted amounting to $111,142.86. The number of registered voters had climbed to 2,897 and the votes cast to 1,897.

In March an ordinance was adopted to acquire additional land adjoining the Borough Hall for the construction of the Borough Garages. Fred Decker was appointed Overseer of the Poor. The dispute over the right of the Public Service to substitute busses for trolley cars was still pending and now scheduled for hearing on April 18th.

The continued growth of the Borough was demonstrated by the receipt of bids or maps for Lena, Reid Edward, Seminole Streets, Brookside Avenue, Bissett Street, Furman and Nickel Avenue, as well as approval of curbs and sidewalks for Dane Street and Henry Street, as well as the extension of sewer lines on a large number of streets.

*Washington Road Pavement—and Other Improvements*

Probably the principal improvement agreed upon in 1928 was the paving of Washington Road from the duPont Crossing to the Deep Cut Bridge at the joint expense of the Borough and County. Increase in traffic

was shown by the need for the erection of traffic lights at the intersection of Miller's Corner and Main Street and Kathryn Streets.

In November petitions were received from the Sayreville Business Men's Association and from the Morgan and Bay View Manor Improvement Association for the establishment of free mail delivery in the community. In December a contract for the erection of a tower and coded fire alarm was awarded to R. V. Afferbach of Perth Amboy for $1,200. The erection of a Fire House at Morgan was also authorized.

*Compensation—Municipal Officials*

An interesting sidelight on the current compensation paid municipal officials is furnished in the Salary Ordinance which provided the following annual salaries for the following officials: Borough Clerk $1,700; Borough Recorder $500; Borough Attorney $1,800.; Overseer of the Poor $360.; Superintendent of Roads $1,500.; Desk Clerk $700.

## 1929

*Engelhardt Returns*

Mayor Dolan began his fourth year as Mayor. The Republican minority on the Council was now reduced to a lone member, George K. Nickel, since William J. Chevalier, Democrat, had replaced George L. Blew. The other members of the Council, all Democratic, were Councilmen J. Henry Boehm, Frank Hartman, Charles Engelhardt and John Lapa. This marked the return of Charles Engelhardt, who had been out of office for three years. At the Organization Meeting John Lapa was elected President of the Council.

*Local Man Becomes Borough Attorney*

At the meeting on January 1st, Sayreville, for the first time in the Borough's history, appointed a native son, James V. Burke, Esq., to serve as Borough Attorney, replacing George L. Burton of South River. Engineer McMichael was reappointed and Borough Clerk Frank P. Kolb continued under tenure of office. Other appointments were as follows: Henry Lehman as Recorder, John Strek as Superintendent of the Water and Sewer Department, Otto Weck as Inspector of Water and Sewer Department, Edward Bailey as Superintendent of Streets and Roads, Ed. Rajek as Fire Warden, Edwin F. Baumann and Patrick F. McCutcheon reappointed to the Board of Health for an additional three year term.

The Mayor presented his Annual Message in which he recommended the paving of lower Main Street from the Thomas Ryan property to the Deep Cut Bridge; that proper street signs and house numbers be completed in the Borough; that adequate garage facilities to house Borough equipment be erected at the rear of the Borough Hall.

At the second meeting in January the Hercules Powder Company requested the paving of Minnisink Avenue. Contract covering same was subsequently awarded on November 6th to George A. McLaughlin on low bid of $31,193.25.

*Recorder Lehman Passes On*

Early in the month of February the Annual Budget was adopted for the year at $129,763. At the first meeting in February a resolution of sympathy was adopted on the death of Recorder Henry Lehman. As

previously observed, he was one of the most colorful figures to occupy public office in the history of the community. While having no formal legal training and very little formal education, he conducted the Recorder's Court with a dignity and a discipline that commanded the respect of the public and the admiration of the governing body.

On February 6th, Joseph T. Karcher, another native son, who had but recently been admitted to the Bar, was appointed Recorder to fill the vacancy caused by the untimely death of Henry Lehman.

*Free Mail Delivery Inaugurated*

At the March meeting a communication was received from Congressman Harold G. Hoffman that the Postmaster General was ready to approve free mail delivery for the community as soon as proper street signs and house numbering had been completed and mail boxes erected. These requirements were met within a month or two and Postmistress Ada E. Holmes was notified accordingly. The first two uniformed mail carriers assigned to Sayreville were Joseph Mochen and Russell E. Brown, both of whom have continued their services as letter carriers in the community up to and including the present date.

On March 1st Otto Weck resigned and Max Unkel was appointed Inspector of the Sewer and Water Department.

*Shafer Succeeds Decker—Garage Is Built*

On April 17th the Borough adopted a resolution of condolence on the death of Overseer of the Poor Fred Decker and at the same meeting the appointment of

his successor, John Shafer, was made and confirmed.

At the May meeting the construction of the garages at the rear of the Borough Hall was awarded to Benjamin J. Gorman on his low bid of $3,300. In June the Morgan Fire House was formally accepted and Krumb Street was approved as a public street.

*Air Age Recognized*

The growth of the community, as well as the state and nation, was reflected by several incidents which occurred during the year. The Mayor recommended that an aerial guide and the name of the Borough, be painted in large letters on the Liberty Theatre roof for the guidance of passing aircraft. The congestion on Routes 4 and 9 across the new Victory Bridge leading to the seashore was so heavy on summer weekends that the governing body was constrained to petition the State Police for assistance in directing traffic on Saturdays, Sundays and holidays. On August 7th Col. Norman Schwarzkopf, then head of the State Police, advised the governing body by letter that he would assign some of his troopers to this traffic work.

*More Developments*

Two new developments were added to Sayreville's growing list of housing developments. The first was that of Auer and Haag in the Parlin Section of the Borough covering Reid Street, Cheesequake Road, etc., and the second one was Section 2 of the President Park development. Deed for Forrest Avenue, from Kathryn Street to the Louis Snyder property was accepted.

A large group of ordinances was adopted in 1929, relative to improving streets and construction of sidewalks and curbs.

## Chapter V

# DOLAN'S TERM EXTENDS THRU SIX DEPRESSION YEARS—1930 to 1935

## 1930

### *Borough Officials Continue as Heretofore*

The year 1930 was unusual in that there were practically no changes in the governing body or in the appointed officials. The candidates whose terms had expired were re-elected at the general election in the preceding November. The governing body consisted of Dolan as Mayor and Councilmen Boehm, Chevalier, Engelhardt, Hartman and Lapa, all Democrats, with Councilman Nickel continuing as the sole representative of the minority party.

Attorney Burke, Engineer McMichael and the other appointed officials were renamed to their respective posts and confirmed without controversy. Clerk Kolb continued in office under tenure while Tax Collector Weber and Assessor Feihle retained their respective posts.

### *Financial Condition of Sayreville Remains Good*

The principal comments in the Mayor's Message were his expression of satisfaction at the financial condition of the community due to the prompt payment of taxes by both the industries and the individual home

owners. The annual budget of $151,457.64 was duly adopted early in the year.

*Chemicals Inc. Is New Industry*

At the February 26th meeting evidence of the construction of a new industry in the Burt's Creek section of the Borough known as Chemicals, Inc. became a matter of record when contract for the installation of a 6-inch water main to serve this industry was awarded to W. G. Fritz on their bid of $15,596.00. This factory was designed to extract alumina from the clay deposits which abound in that area. While the process was effective and the quality of material produced was high, the project proved an economic failure. This was due to the fact that general world conditions made it possible for foreign countries to produce and deliver to this area alumina at a lower price than the cost of production in the newly constructed plant. As a result the operation was abandoned. The property was later acquired by the Borough under tax foreclosure and subsequently resold to other industries which presently operate it.

*First National Bank of Sayreville Opens*

On April 2nd the governing body received an invitation for the formal opening of the First National Bank of Sayreville to be held on April 5th. This was Sayreville's first banking institution. It had begun operation in a modest way in the fall of the preceding year. Temporary quarters were established in the so-called New Plant office of the Sayre & Fisher Brick Co., now occupied by the American Legion. Ground was immediately broken for their new building on

upper Main Street and by April 5th the new edifice was completed and ready for occupancy. The establishment of this bank marked a milestone in the Borough's progress and the successful completion of an objective which had been long advocated by leading business men in the community.

*Census Shows Population 8,642*

Further signs of the Borough's growth appeared when Chief Enumerator Kane reported that the 1930 federal census gave Sayreville an official population of 8,642. Incidentally, the registered vote at this time was 2,352 and the votes actually cast, 2,118, indicating the keen interest which the local residents took in their municipal elections.

At this time the Mayor and Council decided that the question of providing a modest salary for the governing body should be submitted to the public on referendum. However, notwithstanding the very modest salary suggested, the voters rejected the proposal by a vote of 497 for the proposal as contrasted with a vote of 728 against the proposal. 893 failed to vote on the question.

It is interesting to note the prevailing salaries of the appointed officials at this time. The Recorder's was listed as $600., the Overseer of Poor at $540., the Janitors of the Firehouses at $300. and a full time desk clerk at $1,020. The Police Department fared somewhat better with the Chief's salary increased from $2,500. to $2,780. per annum and the Patrolmen's from $2,280. to $2,460. per annum.

Fire Chief H. Phair reported that fire damage for the Borough in 1929 had been kept down to $22,745.

The August meeting was concerned with the long

pending dispute over the substitution of busses for trollies. This was finally settled by the adoption of a resolution consenting to such substitution.

At the September 17th meeting the minutes record a request from the Plant Manager of Management & Engineering Co. for the extension of an 8-inch water main to the Plant they were constructing on River Road.

*Ordinances Covering Improvements*

Further demonstration of the growth and expansion of the Borough was indicated in the adoption of Ordinances to widen, straighten, alter and establish the curb and street lines on lower Main Street from School House No. 4 to the Deep Cut Bridge, plans to pave Ernston Road with State aid and the paving of Miller Avenue in Lower Sayreville, as well as the construction of curbs and sidewalks on same and the construction of curbs and sidewalks on Washington Road from Bissett Street to the South River Bridge.

## 1931

*Depression Widespread*

The year 1931 was marked by strong evidence that the depression which had hit the country was broadening and deepening. Not only was the subject touched upon in the Mayor's Message, but frequently throughout the year reports were made on the number of men seeking part time work and the number of families on actual relief and the method required to obtain State Aid for relief cases.

*Creamer Succeeds Boehm*

The only change in the personnel of the governing body was the substitution of Democrat James F. Creamer for Democrat Henry Boehm, who did not seek reelection. Thomas F. Dolan continued as Mayor. The remaining Councilmen were William Chevalier, Charles Engelhart, Frank Hartman and John Lapa, Democrats and Councilman George K. Nickel the sole surviving Republican. Borough Clerk Kolb continued in office under tenure. James V. Burke was reappointed Attorney; Joseph T. Karcher, Recorder; John Strek, Superintendent of Water; Edward Bailey, Superintendent of Streets; Hugh Singleton and Michael Creamer were reappointed for three year terms on the Board of Health.

*McMichael Holdover Appointee*

The only hitch developed in the reappointment of Engineer A. T. McMichael. Apparently he did not have sufficient votes to assure confirmation on January 1st, so he served as a holdover until February 4th. However, the opposition to McMichael could not muster enough votes to replace him and he was reappointed in February.

*"Made" Work for Unemployed*

The Mayor's Message contained many recommendations. It was only natural that many of them covered road construction work, the opening of Journee Mill Road, Oak Street, etc., as means of providing more work for local men, many of whom were unemployed. As a matter of fact, the Message commented

on the great distress caused by the depression and requested that needy families report their needs to the Borough so that steps could be taken to eliminate their distress.

*Duck's Nest*

For the first time, Duck's Nest was recommended as a summer bathing lake and a recommendation made that the consent of the owners be obtained. Subsequent events proved the soundness of the Mayor's recommendation. Not only did the Borough take over this lake for the purpose indicated, but for the next quarter of a century it proved to be the most popular bathing facility in the area and is still in current use today by many residents of the Borough during the summer months.

*Two Large Mack Trucks Needed*

The activity in the first month of 1931 gave some indication of what was to follow. A budget of $174,328.20 was adopted, which was some $23,000. higher than the preceding year. Borough Clerk was directed to advertise for the purchase of two large Mack Trucks for road work and there was other evidence that the Borough would undertake as many improvements as their finances would permit, to create work for needy families.

*Auditors Engaged*

On January 21st the firm of A. M. Hart & Co. was employed as Municipal Auditors. It is noteworthy that the services rendered the Borough were so satis-

factory that they continued to perform these services uninterruptedly for more than 25 years.

On March 18th Engineer McMichael reported that the Tax Map was approximately 90% complete.

*Gypsies Appear—Disappear*

The coming of summer brought with it some roving bands of gypsies. These nomads apparently staked out an encampment in the Rose's Corner section of the Borough. This led to vociferous complaints by the residents. The governing body was so anxious to cooperate with the residents that they proceeded forthwith to adopt a stringent license ordinance, which provided, among other things, license fees of $100. While the records are not clear on this subject, it is presumed that the gypsies broke camp and left promptly.

*Assessor Feihle Dies—Muschick Fills Vacancy*

In August the governing body took note of the passing of Tax Assessor Abraham Feihle. Although running on the Republican ticket in what was reputed to be a Democratic community, he enjoyed great popularity and was a consistent winner at the polls. He was a man of recognized moderation and this extended to everything, including assessments, which may have accounted at least in part for the popularity he enjoyed. The governing body filled the vacancy thus created by appointing Mr. Fred Muschick, a prominent local manufacturer. Mr. Muschick was elected to the office of Assessor the following November and served in this capacity until his death in November 1933.

*Emergency Relief*

As Fall approached the evidence of the widespread unemployment in the Borough, as well as throughout the nation, became more evident. The funds initially provided in the budget for Emergency Relief had been exhausted. An emergency resolution was required to help defray the costs of the numerous applications for relief which flooded the Borough Hall. The county had appointed former freeholder Lewis Compton as Emergency Relief Director. The Borough, County and State were cooperating in an effort to provide "made work" to help alleviate the widespread distress.

*Police Donate 2%*

As winter approached Councilman Hartman reported that the Borough had been allotted only 10 men twice a week on state road work and 18 men on county road work. Meanwhile, Councilman Chevalier reported that a total of 90 Borough men had been given part time work on various projects. At this point the Police Department volunteered to donate 2% of their wages, an offer which was gratefully accepted by the governing body.

*Borough Makes First Water Application*

In the latter part of the year the Borough made its first application to the State Water Policy Commission and obtained the right to divert 1,000,000 gallons of water per day from a 30-acre tract owned by the Borough lying between Journee Mill Road and the South River. Unfortunately, the proposal was never prosecuted to completion. One delay after another ensued

until finally the salt intrusion in the deeper stratas of sand in this area became so pronounced that the state cancelled the Borough's permit to withdraw water from this tract many years later.

## 1932

### *No Changes in Official Body*

1932 marked the commencement of Mayor Dolan's seventh year as the Chief Executive. There was no change in the political complexion of the governing body. Councilmen William Chevalier and Charles Engelhardt, both Democrats, had been reelected at the General Election the preceding November. Hold-over Democrats included James F. Creamer, Frank Hartman, and John Lapa, with George K. Nickel the lone Republican.

At the preceding fall elections Joseph J. Weber was again reelected Tax Collector and Fred Muschick, who had been serving under an interim appointment, following the death of Abraham Feihle, was elected for a full term of three years.

There were no changes in the official appointments. These included James V. Burke, Borough Attorney; A. T. McMichael, Engineer; Joseph T. Karcher, Recorder; John Strek, Superintendent of Water; Edward Bailey, Superintendent of Streets; Max Unkel, Inspector of the Water Department; Desk Clerk John Weck; Edwin F. Baumann and P. F. McCutcheon, members of the Board of Health for three years.

### *Depression Problems*

The Mayor's Message again served to highlight

some of the problems created by the depression. The Message reported on the necessity for the issuance of Tax Anticipation Notes to the extent of $30,000. in the preceding year to help finance the cost of Emergency Relief in the Borough. Early in the year the budget was adopted and had now gone to $164,224.27. The registered voters in the Borough were listed as 2,729 and the votes actually cast were 2,628. It would appear that in the depression the people were taking a more lively interest in going to the polls to vote than they had ever done before.

Paul Janocha, Fire Chief, reported that fire damage in the Borough for the preceding year, 1931, amounted to only $30,925.

*Katherine A. Shafer Commences Service*

Early in February the Council accepted with regret the resignation of John J. Shafer as Overseer of the Poor, due to ill health. In his place they appointed his wife, Katherine A. Shafer. This was the beginning of a term of service for Mrs. Shafer which was to continue without interruption for more than twenty years and up until her death. She proved to be not only a capable and efficient business administrator but a faithful and devoted public official as well.

*Milliken Relief Director's Representative*

Early in March, another prominent name appears on the official records of the Borough. The Minutes disclose that Mahlon G. Milliken had been appointed as the County Relief Director's personal representative in supervising general relief in the Borough. The County Director, Lewis Compton, later rose to the

position of State Director of Relief. His executive ability was so pronounced that after the election of Franklin D. Roosevelt to the Presidency in 1932, he was summoned to Washington, where he served as Assistant Secretary of the Navy until his death.

Mr. Milliken, on the other hand, was a Chemical Engineer in charge of the Hercules Powder Company's Plant in the Parlin Section of Sayreville. He, too, was a man of outstanding talents. His deep sense of public service was evidenced by his willingness to serve not only in connection with the relief administration but later on as an elected member of the local Board of Education. His highly specialized training with the Hercules Powder Company was also recognized by a number of appointments which eventually resulted in his transfer to the Home Office at Wilmington, Delaware and his election as a Director of the Board and a Vice President of the Company.

In May the governing body adopted a resolution of condolence marking the passing of former Township Committeeman William Burke, the father of Borough Attorney James V. Burke.

In June, confirmation was received from the State Highway Department that they would contribute $18,000. toward the cost of the paving of Kathryn Street, now known as Pulaski Avenue.

*Borough Employees Donate—Borough Borrows*

On July 20th, all of the Borough employees, not to be outdone by the Police Department, notified the Borough of their willingness to donate 10% of their salaries for one year to aid in defraying the cost of Emergency Relief made necessary by the depression.

At the September 7th meeting further evidence of

the depth and the extent of the depression became evident in the official records. For the first time in many years the Borough was compelled to borrow $40,000. on Tax Anticipation Notes to help finance the cost of government during the last half of the year. Even at the December 21st meeting an additional $20,000. had to be borrowed on Tax Anticipation Notes for the same purpose.

*Tax Map Approved*

At the October meeting Engineer McMichael informed the governing body that the Tax Map had been approved by the State Tax Department and payment to Mr. McMichael in the amount of $7,100. was duly authorized. This marked the culmination of a project initially proposed by Mayor Quaid twelve years earlier and actually undertaken by McMichael more than five years before its actual completion.

*Recorder Resigns*

At the November 16th meeting Recorder Karcher submitted his resignation as Recorder. Karcher was just completing his third term in the State Legislature and had been appointed to serve as Deputy Surrogate at New Brunswick and the increased duties of this new office made it impossible for him to carry on the work of local Recorder. Mr. Fred C. Schmitt, former General Manager of the Sayre & Fisher Brick Co. General Store was appointed to fill the vacancy the following January.

At the December 7th meeting the Chairman of the Water Committee reported that the Borough had struck good water at its new test well on the Journee

Mill Road Tract at 119 feet. Unfortunately the Borough did not press the advantage then present and authorize the construction of permanent wells which would have made this water available to the municipality at a time when it was obtainable.

## 1933

### *Depression Peak—G.O.P. Gains*

The predominant note throughout the year 1933 was the world wide depression which had by this time reached its peak.

Thomas F. Dolan began his eighth term as Mayor. The General Election in the preceding year had been one of the "hottest" in the Borough's history. The veteran Republican, George K. Nickel, decided to give up his post of Councilman which he had held since 1924 and to stand as the Republican candidate for Mayor against the veteran campaigner Dolan. The race was a close one but Dolan nosed out Nickel by a small margin.

However, the balance of the Democratic ticket did not fare so well. John Lapa and his Democratic running mate went down to defeat. In their stead two new Republican Councilmen were elected in the person of John Fritz, Jr. and Thomas Thompson. Both of these were newcomers on the local political scene. Thompson proved to be such a popular vote-getter that he became the Republican standard bearer for the post of Mayor two years later and was successful.

*Democrats Still in Control—Depression Measures Continue*

Meanwhile, the Democrats still retained control of the governing body. The holdover Councilmen were William Chevalier, James F. Creamer, Charles Engelhardt and Frank Hartman, while Thompson and Fritz now constituted the Republican minority.

The Mayor's Message again contained many references to the conditions brought about by the current depression. He commented on the ever increasing costs of Emergency Relief and the operation of the local Poor Department. He commended the many public spirited citizens who were contributing their time and services in helping in the administration of the relief problem to alleviate the distress of those less fortunate than themselves. He also complimented the P.T.A. Organizations who were assisting the needy families in the Borough by the distribution of food and clothing. That the condition was widespread throughout the country was demonstrated by the fact that the local police records showed that they had afforded "overnight accommodation" to some 600 transients in the course of the preceding year.

*Few Changes*

There were few changes in the official appointments. Clerk Frank P. Kolb continued under tenure and Tax Collector Weber and Assessor Muschick by election. Borough Attorney Burke was reappointed. So was Engineer McMichael, Superintendent of Water John Strek, Inspector of the Water Department Max Unkel and Desk Clerk John Weck. Former Councilman John J. Kierst was appointed to the Board of Health for a

three year term and Fred C. Schmitt was appointed as Recorder to fill the vacancy created by the resignation of Joseph T. Karcher. Councilman Chevalier was elected President of the Council by his fellow Councilmen.

The Annual Budget for 1933 amounted to $153,-352.90 and was adopted after a heated public session, with the minority members voting in opposition.

*Additional Emergency Relief*

In February three separate resolutions regarding Emergency Relief were adopted. One related to the receipt of $3,700. from the State under special grant under clause B, which indicated that there was an excessive expenditure by the Borough of $867.33 in the relief disbursements by the Borough for the month of January. The Council's resolution applied to the State for an allowance to cover this expenditure. Another resolution was adopted asking for further State Aid in the amount of $4,500. to cover the month of March.

*Tax Collections Poor*

Evidence that tax collections were poor was also indicated by the fact that as early as February the Collector was authorized to borrow $5,000. on the Tax Anticipation Note to cover current expenditures. On March 15th a similar resolution again authorizing the Collector to borrow an additional sum for the same purpose was adopted. At the same meeting in March another resolution was adopted requesting State Aid for Emergency Relief for the month of April in the amount of $5,500. On April 18th, a similar resolution was adopted asking for State Aid in the amount of

$5,000. for the month of May. Thus it would appear that the State was contributing toward the solution of the local relief problem at the rate of approximately $5,000. a month. This does not seem excessive in the light of the fact that the depression had reached its climax shortly before the induction of the newly elected President Roosevelt in March 1933; that unemployment was widespread; that there were bread-lines in many cities and a number of the banking institutions in the country closing.

*Many Applicants for Liquor Licenses at 3.2%*

In April the official records indicate the first relaxation of prohibition. It had been in force since shortly after World War I. On April 5th a resolution was adopted granting licenses to 15 applicants to sell fermented malt liquor not to exceed 3.2%. This was followed at a special meeting six days later by approval of 11 more licenses to sell 3.2% malt beverages. Thus the Borough already had 26 licenses issued for even this limited type of malt beverage. Before this scramble for liquor licenses had run its course the Borough had issued 57 plenary retail consumption licenses and 6 package liquor licenses, or a total of 63 licenses for a community with a population of less than 10,000! This was obviously an over-compensation for conditions which had existed locally before the advent of prohibition, when only 4 local personages had been able to secure licenses to sell alcoholic beverages, when their issuance was under the jurisdiction of the County Courts, rather than the local governing body.

*Councilmen Engelhardt and Bailey Die—Janocha Appointed*

On May 3rd the governing body adopted a resolution of condolence on the death of Charles Engelhardt, who had died suddenly. Mr. Engelhardt had long been a prominent figure in local Democratic circles. He had served as a Justice of the Peace for some years before his entrance into politics. He was a stalwart and life long supporter of Frank Hartman, with whom he had served as a fellow Councilman for many years and with whom he was still serving at the time of his death. In private life he was employed as a carpenter for many years at the Sayre & Fisher Brick Company. The Mayor and Council appointed Paul Janocha to fill the vacancy caused by his death.

On June 21st the governing body took formal notice of the passing of Edward Bailey, Road Supervisor for many years, and extended condolence to his family.

*Depression Deepens—Muschick Dies*

While there was some slight easing of the financial burden due to the depression during the summer months, the problem reappeared in September, when the Collector was again authorized to borrow $10,000. in Tax Anticipation Notes to help finance the cost of local government during the latter half of the year. Again, on October 18th, a similar resolution was adopted covering a similar amount for the same purpose.

On November 1st Council received a request from Lewis Compton, County Director of Relief, requesting all of the local municipal officials to meet with him at the County Court House in New Brunswick to plan

ways and means of arranging for part time work and other measures to alleviate the distress of the unemployed during the winter months.

On November 15th the records indicate the death of Assessor Fred Muschick and the governing body appointed local Building Contractor William F. Albert to fill his unexpired term. The appointment was confirmed unanimously.

*Prohibition Ends*

By the end of the year the last semblance of Prohibition disappeared. The State had by statute created a Department of Alcoholic Beverage Control and had appointed D. Frederick Burnett as its Director. The local governing body adopted a resolution on December 6th setting the fees for licenses to control the sale of alcoholic beverages in the Borough, providing for the form of application to be filed therefor as specified by the A.B.C. Director and providing that all licenses issued should continue until their expiration on the following June 30, 1934.

The minutes of the December 27th meeting indicated that Chief Gross had suffered a broken ankle while in the performance of his duties and would be incapacitated for a time, and that his duties were to be taken over by Harry Olsen as Acting Chief of Police pending Chief Gross' recovery.

## 1934

*Roads Improved Under Civil Works Administration*

Mayor Dolan delivered his 9th Annual Message on January 1st, 1934 with strong overtones of the world-

wide depression still very much in evidence on all sides. He commented that while tax collections in the preceding year had not been good the Borough had maintained its credit by meeting all of its obligations. He pointed out the many street and other improvements which had been made in the Borough with the aid of the Civil Works Administration sponsored by the Federal government. This was later to be referred to as both P.W.A. for Public Works Administration and W.P.A. for Works Progress Administration as the depression continued.

Among the recommendations contained in the Mayor's Message was that the Borough adopt the improvement of its many local roads with semi permanent pavement made of oil and cracked stone to replace the gravel roads which had been characteristic for so many decades.

*Boehm Returns—Budget Decreases*

The only important change in the governing body was the replacement of Councilman Frank Hartman by Councilman J. Henry Boehm also a Democrat. At the preceding general election in November the familiar team of Hartman and Engelhardt was missing. Engelhardt had died earlier in the year; Paul Janocha was appointed to fill the vacancy and also won his party's nomination to fill the post at the general election. Hartman was apparently discouraged at the loss of his former running mate and withdrew as a candidate leaving the field to Boehm and Janocha.

The holdover Democrats on the Council were Chevalier and Creamer and holdover Republicans Fritz and Thompson. Creamer was elected President of the Council by his fellow members.

The governing body made the following appointments: Borough Attorney, James V. Burke; Borough Engineer, A. T. McMichael; Superintendent of Water and Sewer, John Strek; Supervisor of Streets and Roads, Casper Shuler; Recorder, Fred C. Schmitt; Members of the Board of Health for 3 years, Hugh Singleton and Michael Creamer.

The annual budget was adopted as usual amounting to $142,347.39. This represented a decrease of $11,000. below the preceding year, a very unusual occurrence, particularly in the face of a growing population. The registered vote had climbed to 4,074 and the votes cast to 3,262.

*Depression Still in Evidence*

That the country was still in the throes of the depression was evident early in the year. On January 17th a resolution was adopted authorizing the inclusion of approximately $7,000. more for local relief in addition to the $8,000. already appropriated in the budget, or a total of about $15,000. representing the Borough's share alone.

On February 21st a resolution requesting State aid for emergency relief in the amount of $4,000. for the month of March was adopted. The meetings of March and April also were devoted in part to a discussion of the County and State's insistence that the Borough carry at least $17,000. of the cost of relief as its share. Deputy County Director of Relief P. M. Geronimo attended the April meeting with reference to the matter. However, it appears that the depression had reached and passed its peak since the cost per month during the preceding year averaged better than $5,000. for this purpose.

The tax collections were still below normal was indi-

cated by an authorization on June 20th directing the Collector to borrow $15,000 on tax anticipation notes to cover current expenditures.

However, the monthly cost of relief did rise even beyond the $5,000. per month when on November 7th as winter approached the Borough adopted a resolution requesting $6,000. in State aid for the month of November. And, at the end of the year Emergency Relief Administrator Joseph E. Tedesco submitted to the Borough an estimate for the following year indicating that the estimated relief load in Sayreville would be $48,366. of which the Borough would be expected to contribute $11,532.

*Liquor Ordinance Adopted*

On July 5th the Borough adopted its basic Ordinance "to regulate the sale of alcoholic beverages in the Borough of Sayreville and to require licenses therefor, establishing that license fees to be paid for same, etc." Notwithstanding the fact that the fees for these licenses were fairly steep amounting to $325. for the average tavern, this did not seem to act as a deterrent. The records indicate that some 29 licenses were issued for the year—and this notwithstanding the fact that the depression was still very much with us.

*National Lead Comes to Sayreville*

But all items of business recorded for the year 1934 were not on the depressing side. Already there began to appear signs of the bright industrial future which lay ahead for the Borough. Between July and December the municipality adopted at least 3 or 4 ordinances which marked the coming of the huge National Lead

Company plant to Sayreville. These included an Ordinance adopted on July 11th to vacate a portion of Kearny Dock Road and another on July 13th for the opening of Chevalier Avenue, and a third on October 17th to vacate a portion of Coleman Road.

The story of how the National Lead Company was persuaded to come to Sayreville is an interesting tale in itself. A few years earlier, the author who was then a member of the legislature observed a news story in a local newspaper that the National Lead Company were inspecting sites in a nearby community which might be suitable for a proposed new plant. With nothing more to go on than this information, the author dispatched a telegram to the home office of the National Lead Company urging them to consider Sayreville as the site for their new plant. As a result thereof an appointment was subsequently made to escort various executives and engineers of the Lead Company along Sayreville's waterfront property so they might inspect the potential sites available here. It was not long thereafter before the company announced the purchase of the site of their present plant from Sayre & Fisher Land Company. Since its original construction it has been greatly increased in size until today it is one of the largest industrial ratables in the community and a source of considerable tax revenue to the Borough.

*Duhernal Reservoir Created*

The last ordinance to be approved in the year 1934 was adopted on December 19th. It also was connected directly with the National Lead Company plant. It granted permission for the company to install a 16-inch water main via Oak Street, Routes 4 and 9 and

Chevalier Avenue from the Company's water storage tank at the top of Oak Street to the plant itself. This is presently part of the large Duhernal water system which supplies this company as well as DuPont and Hercules with millions of gallons of water required daily to carry on their operations.

When it appeared that the underground sources of water might not be adequate to meet the ever increasing requirements of these industries they pooled their resources creating an internal water policy board, quietly bought up the lowlands adjacent to certain parts of the upper reaches of the South River as well as Manapalan and Machiponox Brooks and by constructing a dam across the South River 1000 feet or so West of where S-28 crosses same, they created the Duhernal Reservoir and at the same time impounded many millions of gallons of reserve water supply. This project alone has been a very stabilizing influence in assuring the continued industrial prosperity of the area.

## 1935

### *Weischadle Replaces Creamer as Councilman*

This year marked Mayor Dolan's final year of service as Chief Executive of the Municipality. In the preceding general election held in November Councilman Chevalier had been reelected and with him two newcomers, Richard Weischadle, a Democrat, replacing James F. Creamer who did not seek reelection, and Frank Lapa, a Republican. Thus the political status of the governing body was evenly divided with Councilman Fritz and Thompson the holdover Republicans and Councilman Boehm the holdover Democrat. There were no significant changes in the official appointments.

Joseph J. Weber was reelected Tax Collector for an additional 3 year term at the polls in November. Edwin Baumann and Patrick F. McCutcheon were reappointed as members of the local Board of Health.

*Dolan's Final Message*

The Mayor's Message still stressed the seriousness of the depression and the gravity of the financial situation confronting the Borough. He commended the governing body on using the Federal Civil Works Administration and the Emergency Relief Program for the construction of many needed improvements in the Borough such as the extension of sewer and water lines, the grading and surfacing of streets, etc.

The Message also included a recommendation that additional room be furnished in the Borough Hall for the use of the Recorder and Police Department. Incidentally they were presently using only what amounted to a corridor with the Recorder holding court in one corner and the Chief of Police having his desk at the opposite corner.

*Employees Continue Contributions for Relief*

Early in the month of February the annual budget of $157,563.85 was adopted. Signs that the depression was still running its course appeared in both the budget and the resolutions and minutes of the governing body. On January 16th a resolution requesting State assistance for relief in the amount of $7,000. for the month of January was adopted, with the Borough to furnish $961. of this amount. Moreover, at the February 20th meeting an amended salary ordinance was adopted in which all municipal employees

receiving between $1,000. and $2,000. per annum were to contribute 3% and those receiving in excess of $2,000. were to contribute 5% as a donation toward the relief fund.

*Election Districts Increased—Police Appointed*

Signs that the Borough was still growing notwithstanding the depression was evident on all sides. The registered vote had climbed to 4110. There seemed to be a slacking off in voter interest, however, since only 3092 of those eligible cast their votes. However, the governing body felt the necessity of increasing the election districts to 7 to accommodate the larger enrollment of voters. On March 6th three new patrolmen were appointed to the Police Force namely Joseph Fritz, Neil Chevalier and Fred Weischadle.

*Borough Obtains Water from Perth Amboy—Quaid Dies*

On April 3rd the Borough consummated a 10 year contract with the City of Perth Amboy to supply the Borough with its water needs during that period. Immediately thereafter an ordinance previously adopted for the construction of the Borough's own water works was repealed. However, the Borough was later to regret this failure to prosecute its original intention to assure its own water supply, since it was forced to undertake this project many years later, under unfavorable circumstances and at greatly increased costs.

On April 17th the governing body adopted a formal in memoriam resolution on the death of former Mayor John J. Quaid, the Borough's first Mayor.

*Borough Builds Sewage Treatment Plant*

The minutes of April 3rd indicate that the Borough had been subject to a suit by the State Department of Health to compel it to erect a Sewage Treatment Plant. This was part of a drive throughout the Raritan Valley to compel all municipalities bordering on the Raritan River to do likewise. Borough Attorney Burke advised the governing body that Vice Chancellor Buchanan declared that the Mayor and individual members of the Council were subject to disciplinary action by the Court unless this work was commenced promptly. The Borough responded by engaging Consulting Engineer Louis P. Booz of Perth Amboy at a fee of 7% of the cost of the project which was subsequently built under the PWA program and with the federal government contributing approximately 60% of the gross cost of same.

It was evident that tax collections were improving since not until July 17th was the Borough Treasurer required to issue a tax anticipation note and then only for $3,500. to take care of current expenses.

*Deep Cut Bridge Controversy Begins*

On September 4th the governing body had before it the condition of the Deep Cut Bridge. A resolution was adopted asking the Public Utility Commission to compel the Pennsylvania Railroad to either widen it or construct a new bridge. The Mayor and Council did not know at that time that it would be more than 21 years before the litigation would be prosecuted to completion and the bridge replaced.

*Public Farmers Market Rejected*

The records indicate that on September 18th Martin J. Walus of Washington Road had planned to conduct a public farmers market on property adjacent to his service station. However, the local Businessmen's Association filed a protest. The governing body responded by adopting an ordinance imposing substantial license fees and the idea was abandoned.

After years of negotiations the governing body finally had the State Highway Department agree to contribute toward the cost of the paving of Kathryn Street. The contract was awarded on August 7th to Utility Construction Company at $35,582.64. Incidentally it was about this time that the name of the street was changed from Kathryn Street to Pulaski Avenue on petition of the residents living on the street.

*Quigley Co. Expands—Dolan Ends Service*

The Borough wound up its business for the year by selling a factory known as the Old Bridge Enameled Brick and Tile Works which it had acquired by tax foreclosure to representatives of the Quigley Co. for $19,500. Shortly thereafter they applied for a federal loan to rehabilitate the plant and have kept it in active operation ever since.

Thomas Dolan completed his 10 years of service as Mayor by submitting a farewell message to his colleagues in which he thanked them for their cooperation. In return he was given a rising vote of thanks.

MAYOR THOMAS O. THOMPSON—1936 and 1937.

## Chapter VI

# THOMPSON IS FIRST REPUBLICAN MAYOR—1936 and 1937

## 1936

*Thompson First Republican Mayor*

This year was marked by the election of the first Republican Mayor in the history of the Borough, in the person of Thomas O. Thompson.

*Other Changes*

Other significant changes were the election of John J. Andrejewski, Republican, and Adolph F. Schmitt, Democrat, as Councilmen. These two men replaced John Fritz, Jr. and Thomas O. Thompson as Councilmen and resulted in two Republicans and four Democrats on the governing body. The holdover Democrats were Boehm, Chevalier and Weischadle, with Lapa the holdover Republican. Richard Weischadle was elected President of the Council. However, there were some defections from the Democratic majority which resulted in frequent tie votes which gave the Republican Mayor the opportunity of casting the deciding vote.

*Dissension on Appointments*

There were a few changes in the official appoint-

ments. Probably the principal one was the substitution of Karl H. Wilber as Engineer in the place and stead of A. T. McMichael, who was unable to acquire sufficient voting strength to assure his reappointment. Even when Wilber's appointment was put through by resolution in April, it was by a 3-3 vote with Councilman Adolph Schmitt casting his lot with the 2 Republican Councilmen and the Mayor casting the deciding vote.

Other appointments, most of which were divided votes, were Cecilia Wrobel, Clerk to the Water and Collection Department; Casper Shuler, Road Supervisor and Joseph Kupsch as Janitor of the Borough Hall. Borough Attorney Burke was reappointed without opposition and Borough Clerk Kolb continued in office under tenure. John Strek was appointed as Superintendent of the Water Department and John J. Kierst to the Board of Health by divided votes.

The Mayor's Message again commented on the financial exigencies of the Borough during the depression years and recommended that sanitary sewage facilities be extended to the Melrose and Morgan Sections of the Borough.

*Consistent Republican Nays*

Early in February the Annual Budget of $193,-563.90 was adopted. To show their consistency, the Republican members voted against the budget, also. The registered vote had now climbed to 4,110 votes, while the votes cast were tabulated at 3,009.

In January the governing body petitioned the Board of Freeholders to make Journee Mill Road a County Road and on March 18th the freeholders complied.

With the substitution of Wilber for McMichael as Borough Engineer, the ownership of the tracings of

the Borough Tax Map came in question. Borough Attorney Burke submitted a legal opinion that they were the property of the Borough and Engineer McMichael delivered same to his successor.

*Depression Still Felt*

There was still evidence that the country had not as yet emerged from the depression, when on February 5th the Borough requested 50% assistance from the State in providing relief estimated at $2,013. for the month of January. Later, the governing body again asked the State Aid in the amount of $2,072. against an estimated relief load of $3,033. for the month of February. Again in February the Borough authorized its Treasurer to issue an Emergency Note for $1,922. to repay the Borough's share of State Emergency Relief at the rate of $961. per month. On March 18th a resolution was adopted estimating the monthly load at that time at $4,875. and requesting State Aid in the amount of $3,914.

*"Old Morgan Plant Road"*

Evidence that the Borough was still growing was indicated at the June 17th meeting, when the governing body accepted the deeds from the Whitehead Brothers Co. and the Morgan Development Co. to what was then known as the "Old Morgan Plant Road." They specified that thereafter the road was to be known as "Ernston Road Extension". However, notwithstanding this determination by the governing body, the road has continued to be known as the "Morgan Plant Road" down to the present date.

*Liquor Licenses and Assistance Climb*

On June 29th the governing body approved a resolution authorizing the issuance of approximately 40 liquor licenses. Although the depression was still with us, it did not appear to have too adverse an effect upon this particular type of business establishment.

In August the governing body formally petitioned the State Financial Assistance Commission for continued aid in carrying the relief load in the Borough. At the same time it sent a formal request to the Postal Authorities at Washington, D. C., urging them to relocate the existing Post Office by moving it from River Street to somewhere in the business district of the Borough.

At the August 19th meeting the State Highway Engineer notified the Council that the State would contribute up to $21,600. toward the paving of Chevalier Avenue.

*Mary C. Guilfoyle Appointed*

On October 21st a resolution sponsored by Councilman Boehm appointed Mary C. Guilfoyle as Director of Welfare. This was apparently a new post required by state regulations in connection with the administration of Emergency Relief. At the same time Miss Guilfoyle was appointed as Certifying Officer of the Borough, with authority to certify needy persons for employment under the Works Progress Administration Program, which was still in effect under federal and state auspices.

*Low Bid on Chevalier Avenue*

At the November 4th meeting contract for the paving of Chevalier Avenue was awarded to the Jannorone Contracting Company on their low bid of $18,168. This was approximately $3,000. under the amount which the state had agreed to contribute as its share for this improvement, and affords some indication of the bargain prices at which public improvements could be obtained during the depression period.

## 1937

*Republicans in Control*

This was the second year in which the governing body was to be presided over by a Republican Mayor, in the person of Thomas O. Thompson.

In the election the preceding November veteran Councilman J. Henry Boehm had been elected. However, his running mate Richard Weischadle was not reelected. The Republican candidate for Councilman, John Paprota, won election in his stead. This gave the Republicans three votes, with holdovers John J. Andrejewski and Frank Lapa, against three votes for the Democrats, with J. Henry Boehm, William Chevalier and Adolph F. Schmitt. The Republicans were now actually the majority party and could control all of the appointments.

*Burke and Others Win Reappointment*

The only serious controversy arose regarding the reappointment of Borough Attorney Burke. Apparently the Republicans had hoped to replace him, but

Mayor Thompson threw his support to Burke and he obtained reappointment.

The other officials were for the main part reappointed without incident. They included Engineer Wilber, Superintendent of Water John Strek, Cecelia Wrobel as Clerk of the Water Department and Hugh Singleton to the Board of Health. Herman Gallagher, however, displaced Michael Creamer as a member of the Board of Health and Russell Warnsdorfer displaced George Boyler as Supervisor of Roads.

*Controversy over President of the Council*

By state statute the members of the governing body are supposed to elect from among their membership, a fellow Councilman to serve as "President of the Council", in the absence of the Mayor. Councilman William Chevalier was duly nominated for this post. On roll call there was a strict party vote, three for confirmation, three against. This seemingly difficult impass was resolved by merely ignoring the post and not filling it. It appears that the vacancy did not seriously interfere with the functioning of the local Borough government.

*Main Treatment Plant Contracts Let*

In January, after years of preparation and negotiations, contracts covering the construction of the Borough's Main Treatment Plant were finally let on January 11th to five separate bidders at a total cost of approximately $200,000. The Federal Government contributed 45% of the cost under its Public Works Administration. This was one of the many federal

agencies created for the purpose of relieving the unemployment situation which had plagued the country for the past eight years.

*Grading of Streets W.P.A. Projects*

Further evidence of the fact that the depression was still with us was a notice received at the January 20th meeting from J. H. Weitzen, Director of the W.P.A., advising the governing body that W.P.A. projects covering the grading of William, Robert, John and Charles Streets in the Old Bridge Section had been approved, provided the Borough contributed its share.

*$54,000. Increase in Budget*

Early in February the Annual Budget for 1937 amounting to $247,023.29 was adopted. This represented an increase of approximately $54,000. over the preceding year. The increase was apparently due to the need for defraying the Borough's share of W.P.A. and P.W.A. Projects, transportation of workers to jobs and the cost of direct relief.

*Additional Street Improvements W.P.A. Projects*

Again in May the W.P.A. approved an omnibus program for the grading and oiling of many of the local municipal streets, the cost to be defrayed partly by federal funds and partly by Borough funds.

At mid-year the Borough adopted its usual resolution renewing 33 liquor licenses for the license period July 1st to July 1st.

*Petition Re Prohibiting Additional Licenses Filed*

Incidentally, even the local tavern owners appear to have sensed the fact that this particular line of business was becoming overcrowded in the Borough. Early in the Fall 25 local tavern owners petitioned the governing body to adopt an ordinance prohibiting the issuance of any additional licenses and placing a ceiling on the number of local licenses to be issued. However, the petition was merely received and filed.

*First Female Lifeguard*

The meeting of July 7th was marked by an unusual event. The Borough for the first time confirmed the appointment of a female lifeguard for its bathing facilities at Duck's Nest in the person of LaVern Clark. Miss Clark was a daughter of former Mayor Edward E. Clark and had won honors for her athletic ability and particularly her proficiency in swimming and life-saving techniques.

*Ordinance Limiting Hours in Barber and Beauty Shops*

In August practically all of the Barber and Beauty Shops in town also petitioned the governing body to adopt an ordinance which would limit the hours that these establishments could remain open. In due course the governing body complied with this request.

*Compensation Paid Volunteer Firemen*

At the end of the year the minutes disclose the usual resolution calling for the annual stipend for compen-

sation to be paid the three companies of Volunteer Firemen. Disbursements ordered were $353. to Engine Company No. 1, $241. to the Melrose Hose Company and $223. to the Morgan Hose and Chemical Company. It would appear that the total cost to the Borough for volunteer fire personnel was well under $1,000.

*Lapa and Thompson Not Reelected*

The year ended with a valedictory by Councilman Lapa and Mayor Thompson, neither of whom had been reelected the preceding November.

## Chapter VII

# CHEVALIER'S TERMS COVER DEPRESSION'S END AND BEGINNING OF WORLD WAR II—1938 to 1941

## 1938

*Democrats Back in Control*

1938 was marked by many drastic changes in local municipal government.

Republican control of the Mayor's office had proved to be short-lived. Thomas O. Thompson was replaced by William J. Chevalier, a Democrat, as Mayor at the general election in the previous November. Carried with him into office were two new Democratic Councilmen in the person of Charles P. Buchanan and Philip McCutcheon. Both of these men were destined to have extended careers in public office. Buchanan was to serve as Councilman for 12 years. McCutcheon was to serve first as Councilman for several terms, then as Mayor for several terms and finally as Tax Assessor.

The Republican minority on the Council were now represented by John J. Andrejewski and John Paprota. In addition to Buchanan and McCutcheon the Democrats had two holdovers in the persons of J. Henry Boehm and Adolph F. Schmitt. Tax Assessor William F. Albert was reelected for a full term.

MAYOR WILLIAM J. CHEVALIER—1938 to 1941.

*Official Appointments Confirmed*

Most of the official appointments were confirmed without particular incident. These included John Strek, Superintendent of the Water Department; Max Unkel, Inspector of Water Department; Yep Floystrup, Supervisor of Streets and Roads; John Weck, Desk Clerk; Cecelia Wrobel, Clerk to Water and Collection Department; Mary C. Guilfoyle, Welfare Director and Patrick F. McCutcheon and Edwin J. Baumann as members of the Board of Health for 3 years.

*Hassle over Appointments—Economic Administration Prospers*

Joseph T. Karcher was appointed Borough Attorney succeeding James V. Burke, without opposition. The real struggle arose when it came to the appointment of an Engineer. Mayor Chevalier exercising his prerogative as Chief Executive successively nominated A. T. McMichael, Louis P. Booz and Harry Selover for this post, but all were defeated by the vote of the Councilmen. Finally after the expiration of 30 days the holdover Engineer Karl H. Wilber was confirmed in his post by resolution of the governing body over the opposition of the Mayor on February 2nd.

In the month of February the Borough received deeds of dedication to Bright Street signed by the adjacent owners.

On February 16th the local budget for the year amounting to $242,813.00 was introduced and adopted. This represented a reduction of about $5,000. over the preceding year indicating that the new administration had not only pledged themselves to an economical

administration but intended to live up to their platform promises.

*Municipal Treatment Plant Completed and Accepted*

Finally after years of litigation and endless negotiations with the Public Works Administration, disputes over the selection of an Engineer, disputes over the selection of contractors to do the work, the municipal Treatment Plant was certified as having been completed by Newton A. K. Bugbee, a prominent Trenton contracting firm and was accepted on March 2nd on recommendation of Consulting Engineer Louis P. Booz of Perth Amboy. The Borough promptly appointed Mr. Booz as Overseer for the year 1938, DeWitt Rush as Operating Manager and a staff of operators consisting of Edward Solook, Francis Hartman, Charles Lukie, Joseph Gereghty and Edmund Chevalier.

*Olsen Appointed Police Captain*

On March 16th the Borough adopted an amendment to its Police Ordinance creating the post of Police Captain and subsequently and at the next meeting of March 16th appointed Harry Olsen to this post. Olsen had been a patrolman for more than 16 years. He was destined to continue on the police force for many years and to succeed George Gross as Chief of the Department upon his death.

*Suspected Slayer Spotted—Inflation Starts*

At the March meeting a sidelight on a local cause celebre appeared in the minutes of the governing body

when Special Police Officers John Markulic and Andrew S. Malik were commended for their vigilance in spotting Frank Wendolek, suspected slayer of Myrtle White, while they were doing special traffic duty at the intersection of Oak Street and State Highway Route 4 in the Melrose Section of the Borough.

At the March 16th meeting the first warning of the inflation that was soon to overtake the country appeared when contract covering the repairs only necessary to the La France Fire Engine was specified as amounting to approximately $3,000. It was not too long before this that a truck of this kind could be purchased for $4,500.

*McCutcheon Active—MacArthur Avenue to be Paved*

Councilman McCutcheon as Chairman of the Public Buildings and Grounds Committee gave early evidence of his deep interest in the duties of his new office. At the March 16th meeting he reported progress on the construction of the First Aid Headquarters at the rear of the Borough Hall and asked for authorization to clear Duck's Nest of certain impediments so that this area might be improved as a bathing lake for the youth of the Borough the next summer.

At the meeting of April 6th word was received from Supervisor of State Aid Projects that the state had allotted $9,000. of State Aid to cover the paving of Section 2 of Sandfield Road the name of which was later to be changed to MacArthur Avenue.

*Overpass—Underpass Dispute*

At the April 20th meeting the minutes record the

first steps in what was to develop into a long drawn out fight between the Borough and the State Highway Department. Traffic on the newly constructed and widened State Highway Routes 4 and 9 had become so heavy that it endangered the lives of the residents of the Melrose Section attempting to cross the highway. They appealed to the governing body for the installation of a traffic light which would protect them while crossing. At first the State Highway agreed to their request and a traffic light was tentatively approved for this area.

However, the higher echelon of the State Highway appears to have reconsidered the matter and decided that it would be an impairment to the fluidity of traffic from North Jersey to the shore. The approval was countermanded. On May 18th the State Highway Commissioner E. Donald Sterner notified the Borough to this effect. The governing body were disappointed but not discouraged. This proved to be only the beginning of a long fight which eventually resulted in forcing the State Highway to construct a vehicular overpass and a pedestrian underpass at this point for the protection of the residents of Melrose, the cost of which approximated a quarter of a million dollars.

*Creation of New Board*

June 15th marked the creation of the new "Emergency Relief Local Assistance Board." This was a new setup whereby both the State and County were endeavoring to shift the responsibility for relief administration to the local municipal officials, as the country slowly came out of the depression. The records indicate that the Board organized with Mayor Che-

valier as its head, Miss Mary Guilfoyle as its Secretary and Miss Eleanor Evanovich as its Investigator.

*Bus Transportation for W.P.A. Workers*

By the middle of the summer of 1938 it again appeared evident that the depression was still very much of a problem to be contended with. On July 20th the owners of bus lines submitted bids to transport WPA workers to various work sites on County and State Roads. One bid was awarded to Marathon Bus Line Inc. to transport 80 WPA workers to the Cheesequake area at $17.00 per day. A similar contract was awarded to Stelmaszek Bus Company to transport 30 WPA workers to the Raritan Arsenal at $9.00 per day. Another contract to transport 25 or 30 workers from Melrose section to the Raritan Arsenal was awarded to the Public Service Coordinated Transport Co. at $6.00 per day. Later in the summer John Engelhardt asked approval for bus transportation of PWA men to the Cheesequake area. Still later, on September 7th another similar contract was awarded to the Marathon Bus Line Inc. at $8.50 per day.

*Grave Unemployment Problem*

Also in the month of September the Borough applied for State Aid in the amount of $8,550. for the reconstruction of local municipal roads as a WPA project with State and Federal aid which provided that the Borough was to contribute materials and supplies toward the project to the extent of $7,545. These items serve to give a picture of the grave unemployment problem which still confronted the country and the means which were being employed to find essential

work for the heads of families in the reconstruction and improvement of State, County and Municipal roads.

*Emergency Squad Headquarters Dedicated*

On September 7th the minutes disclose that an invitation was extended to the governing body to attend the formal dedication of the Sayreville Emergency Squad Headquarters which had been constructed by the governing body and which ceremonies were scheduled for Sunday, September 11th, at 10:00 A.M.

*Shade Tree Commission Created*

At the same meeting September 7th the first Shade Tree Commission in the history of the Borough was created on the recommendation of Mayor Chevalier. The following members were appointed to serve on the committee: H. H. Tyler, Clarke Kingry, George K. Nickel, J. J. Jablonski, Joseph Pero and Miss Anna Rohde. All nominees were confirmed unanimously by the governing body.

*New Administration Straightens Roads*

Further evidence of the progressive character of the new administration was supplied in two separate efforts which were made to straighten some of the circuitous turns in Jernee Mill Road. On September 28th the Borough obtained permission from Hercules Powder Co. to straighten one of the bends through company property known as the Hoff Tract. Later, on November 2nd similar permission was obtained from the Marome Realty Co. to eliminate another bend.

However, it must be conceded that the road continues to have a number of bends and turns which could stand further attention in an effort to eliminate them.

*Transporting WPA Workers Costly*

On October 5th it appeared that the cost of transporting the WPA workers had been so heavy as to require an emergency note of $5,000. Still later at the end of the year this had to be increased by an additional $2,500. indicating that transportation of WPA workers alone had cost the Borough $7,500. It was estimated that the 1939 relief load in the Borough would amount to $25,700. On December 14th the governing body submitted this figure to the State Financial Assistance Commission with a request for appropriate State Aid in the premises.

*M. E. Church Celebrates 90th Anniversary*

As the year end approached the official minutes of the governing body took note of the celebration of the 90th Anniversary of the founding of the local Methodist Episcopal Church. This appeared in the minutes when the Mayor and Council received an invitation to attend which was extended to them by the Pastor, Rev. Samuel Blair.

*Schmitt and Andrejewski Bid Farewell*

The year ended with farewell messages from Councilmen A. F. Schmitt and John J. Andrejewski who had not been reelected at the preceding election and whose terms of office were expiring. The State notified the Borough that beginning with January 1st, 1939 it

would have to operate on a 100% cash basis in conformity with the recent adoption of new statutes to strengthen the financial stability of municipal governments throughout the state.

## 1939

### *Gereghty and Rappleyea Newcomers*

William J. Chevalier began his second year as Mayor at the Organization Meeting held on January 1, 1939. The only changes in the governing body were the substitution of Councilman Joseph F. Gereghty and Wilbur D. Rappleyea in the place of Councilmen Andrejewski and Schmitt, who were not reelected the preceding November. The Council as now constituted was made up of five Democrats and one Republican. Councilman John Paprota was the minority member.

### *Mayor Comments on Duhernal Dam*

The Mayor presented his second Annual Message in which he thanked the outgoing councilmen for their past services and solicited the assistance of Councilmen Rappleyea and Gereghty in solving the municipal problems confronting the Borough. The message also commented on the construction of the Duhernal Dam at Spotswood by three of our largest industries and the construction of the water mains which were to transport this much needed water to the three industries involved, and the support and cooperation which the Borough had given the industries in this project.

*Official Appointees Same*

There were few, if any, changes in the official appointments. These included Karl Wilber as Engineer; Joseph T. Karcher as Borough Attorney; John Strek as Superintendent of Water; Yep Floystrup as Road Supervisor; Mary Guilfoyle as Welfare Director; Cecelia Wrobel as Clerk in Water Department; John Weck as Desk Clerk; John J. Kierst as a member of the Board of Health for three years. Councilman Boehm was selected to serve as President of the Council for the ensuing year.

*Borough Must Operate on 100% Cash Basis*

Evidence of the effect of the new state statute requiring the Borough to operate on a cash basis became apparent in the adoption of a "Temporary Budget" on January 18th. This amounted to $45,570., an approximate 25% of the preceding year's budget. This was to tide the Borough over until the adoption of the regular budget.

On April 5th the budget in its final form was adopted, amounting to $259,402.70. This marked an increase of approximately $12,000. over the preceding year. The registered vote had meanwhile grown to 4,456. The tax rate stood at a modest $4.50.

*French Street Straightening*

In April Councilman Rappleyea as Chairman of the Road Committee reported on his efforts to widen and straighten French Street. By May he was able to report that all owners of property with the exception of two had moved in their fences and that French Street

was somewhat wider and straighter than it had been heretofore.

*Sayreville's First High School Dedicated*

At the May 24th meeting the records disclose that the Board of Education tendered an invitation to the governing body to be present at the dedication of a new High School which was to be formally dedicated on June 7, 1939. This was the first High School in Sayreville's history. It had been created by enlarging the Wilson School on Dane Street at a cost of around $200,000., of which the Federal Government contributed more than $80,000. through a P.W.A. grant. The governing body voted to accept the invitation and attend the ceremonies.

Progress in the adoption of modern police methods to the local department was indicated by an authorization on June 9th to install a one-way radio in one of the police cars.

*Borough in Real Estate Business*

A sidelight on the overall effect of the depression appeared in an ordinance adopted July 5, 1939. The Borough had been forced to acquire so much property by the foreclosure on tax sale certificates that it actually found itself in the real estate business. Pursuant to an enabling statute adopted by the Legislature, the Borough adopted a lengthy ordinance on that date listing all of its properties and putting a price tag on each property which it designated "minimum" price at which such property could be purchased. The ordinance expired after one year, was reenacted for a one year period and thereafter was not reenacted, the Bor-

ough resorting to the usual method of conducting public auctions after public advertisements covering each parcel.

*Unemployment Problem Still Continues*

Effects of the continuance of the unemployment problem continued to appear as winter approached. At the October, November and December meetings resolutions were adopted authorizing the letting of contracts to provide bus transportation of W.P.A. workers to Rudolph Dettmer at $6.80 per day, Thomas Stelmaszek at $7.00 per day and Marathon Bus Line Inc. at $6.75 per day. The workers were engaged in such places as Johnson Park, Cheesequake Park and on various nearby county and state highways.

*MacArthur Avenue Finally Paved*

On October 11th, contract for the paving of the third and final section of MacArthur Avenue, then known as Sandfield Road, was awarded to Jannarone Construction Company on their low bid of $11,410.65. The State had obliged itself to furnish $9,000. and the Borough fortunately had a balance of $2,500. unexpended from the funds allocated for the construction of the two prior sections.

*Sayre & Fisher Brick Company Reorganizing*

The year ended with the governing body receiving word that one of the local industries, the Sayre & Fisher Brick Company, was still in process of reorganization in the federal courts, and that the courts had restrained the Borough from proceeding with any of

its statutory remedies for the collection of its unpaid taxes in arrears, but the Company had nevetheless paid $21,528.28 representing its current taxes for the year 1939 in full.

## 1940

### *Harmony Prevails as Democrats Control*

Mayor Chevalier began his second term of office and his third year of service as Mayor at the Organization Meeting on January 1, 1940.

With the reelection of Councilman Boehm and the election of Anthony J. Popowski to replace John Paprota, the governing body became solidly Democratic for the first time since the creation of the Borough 20 years earlier.

With harmony prevailing, all incumbents were appointed and confirmed without opposition.

Hugh Singleton and Alfred Schussler were appointed to the Board of Health for three year terms. Recorder Fred C. Schmitt was reappointed for a five year term. J. Henry Boehm was made President of the Council.

This year marked the entrance onto the local scene of two officials who were to be closely identified with municipal government for many years thereafter.

### *Anthony J. Popowski has Distinguished Record*

The first of these was Anthony J. Popowski. After service as Councilman for several terms, he was to stand for election as Mayor and to be elected and reelected to the post as Chief Executive of the Borough for 5 successive terms. Meanwhile, with the creation of the Middlesex County Sewerage Authority he was

first appointed a member of the Commission and later became Chairman of that body, a post he presently holds.

*Alfred W. Schussler—Many Years of Service*

The second figure to appear on the scene was Alfred W. Schussler. After serving as a member of the Board of Health for a number of years, he was nominated and elected as a Councilman. He was renominated and reelected as a Councilman for 5 successive terms, serving as Chairman of the important Finance Committee for many years. He is presently dean of the governing body.

*Budget Decreased Almost $20,000.*

The permanent budget was adopted on March 6th, amounting to $237,045.50, down almost $20,000. from the preceding year. The registered vote was 4,853. The votes cast were 4,210. The tax rate was $4.66.

*Large Arrearages of Unpaid Taxes*

The aftermath of the depression left in its wake large arrearages of unpaid taxes owed the Borough. These were represented by tax sales certificates held by the Borough. Some idea of the quantity of these tax certificates is indicated by a series of resolutions adopted in the spring of 1940 directing the Borough Attorney to foreclose more than several hundred such certificates.

*Thomas A. Edison Bridge Dedicated*

On April 17th the Borough received formal notice of the dedication of the Thomas A. Edison Bridge across the Raritan River which was to be held on June 29th. The Mayor and Council were designated to serve on the Dedication Committee as Honorary Members and they accepted the assignment.

*"Youth Day"*

The April 30th meeting recorded a procedure which has been standard with the governing body for many years, of permitting the youth of the Borough to take over the Borough functions for one day as part of their education in civics. This program was under the sponsorship of the High School and the local Lions Club.

*Traffic Light Battle Comes to a Head*

On May 1st, the running battle between the Borough and the State Highway Commission over the installation of a traffic light on Oak Street and the State Highway in the Melrose Section, for the protection of local residents, came to a head. The Borough Attorney was instructed to notify the State Highway that unless the light was installed promptly suit would be instituted in the Supreme Court to force its installation.

On the same date there was further evidence of the aftermath of the depression when a long list of tax sales certificates were referred to the Borough Attorney for foreclosure.

The number of liquor licenses renewed as of July 1st was 34.

*"Peace Time Army"*

While World War II was ravaging in Europe, its lengthening shadow was making itself felt here in America. The United States had begun mobilization of a "Peace Time Army For National Defense". At the December 4th meeting the governing body paid tribute to Sayreville's first volunteers: Michael Nash, Cleland W. Garber, Edward J. Marcinczyk, John J. Sumoski and John Jakubczak.

*Highway Safety at Rose's Corner*

On December 18th the records indicate that the State Highway Department was busily engaged in separating the grades of traffic crossing at Rose's Corner. In doing so the State Highway at this point was elevated somewhat and the Bordentown Turnpike depressed, thus creating an underpass to promote highway safety.

*Death of William J. Betzler*

Amid the turmoil of current problems and current events the governing body took time out to adopt a resolution of sympathy on the passing of William J. Betzler. A native and lifelong resident of the Borough who served as a County Road Foreman for many years, he first entered public life when he was elected a Councilman in 1920. Thereafter he became the recognized leader of the Republican Party in the Borough for many years. He was also an organizer and Presi-

dent of the Home Extension Building and Loan Association, now Sayreville Savings and Loan, for many years and up until his death.

## 1941

### *Chevalier's Final Year as Mayor*

This year marked Mayor Chevalier's fourth and final year as Chief Executive of the Borough. In the preceding election Councilmen Buchanan and McCutcheon had been reelected for their second three year term. The governing body was still solidly Democratic, the remaining members being Boehm, Popowski, Gereghty and Rappleyea.

### *Progressive Recommendations Made by Mayor*

At the organization meeting on January 1st the Mayor presented his fourth annual message which contained a number of progressive recommendations. These included among others the appointment of a Citizens Committee to seek new industries, the extension of sanitary sewage facilities to the Melrose and Morgan Sections of the Borough, the adoption of a building code and zoning ordinance by the Borough and the construction of a new municipal building. This was by far the most far-reaching and comprehensive message thus far presented by the head of the Borough governing body.

There were no changes in official appointments, all of the appointive Borough officials being reappointed without incident. Councilman Charles P. Buchanan was designated President of the Council for the year 1941.

*Tax Rate Only $4.59*

On February 5th the local budget amounting to $259,932.28 was adopted. This represented an approximate increase of $22,000 over the preceding year. The tax rate, however, was still kept at a modest $4.59.

*World War II Eases Unemployment*

Meanwhile World War II had broken out in Europe. While the United States had not become involved it was evident that the war was having an impact on the economic life of the country and community. Unemployment was rapidly disappearing. The relief load also tapered off. P.W.A. and W.P.A. were folding up. On the local scene the first evidence of new life in the construction industry appeared when Adam Sepka purchased 52 lots in the then defunct President Park development upon which to start a small housing development of his own. The sale at $60.00 a lot was awarded to him at the May 14th meeting.

*New Municipal Building Constructed*

It seemed that this year was to be marked by many outstanding events. Early in the year the governing body accepted the Mayor's recommendation to construct a new Municipal Building. At the April meeting the initial ordinance approving same was adopted. By June Architect M. G. Tuzik had been retained, by August his plans and specifications approved and by October the contracts were let for the work. John De Beer of Ridgefield, N. J., was the general contractor. The total bids for the work, included the furni-

ture and fixtures for the building, totalling only $75,000, all of which was paid out of current cash, thus eliminating any expenses or interest connected with a bond issue. This building proved to be one of the best investments ever made by the governing body since it could not be duplicated today for 3 or 4 times its cost. Mayor Chevalier presided at the ground breaking ceremonies around the first of November—only to be defeated for reelection at the general election which followd a few days later. By comparison with the important items which occurred many of the routine items seemed trivial. These included the purchase of a new Buffalo Fire Truck at $9,535., the widening of Route 35 across the Cheesequake Creek at Morgan and the providing of an access road to the Borough's water front property at this point, the acquisition of the Diamond Realty Co. development property under a tax foreclosure and, of course, the running fight between the Borough and the State Highway Department regarding the traffic light needed on the State Highway in the Melrose Section.

*Fire Department Celebrates 25th Anniversary —Other Items*

At mid-year Borough Attorney Karcher recommended that hence forward all ordinances be assigned numbers chronologically to simplify indexing and reference and the Sayreville Fire Department celebrated its 25th Anniversary on August 23rd.

The governing body indicated that it intended to keep its campaign promises and to comply with the recommendations in the Mayor's Message when it directed Borough Engineer Wilber to prepare working plans and specifications for the extension of sanitary

sewage facilities to the Melrose Section. Sayreville's first post-depression development appeared when Map of Munn Estates Section No. 1 was approved on August 20th.

*Pearl Harbor—December 7th*

By the end of the year the United States was in the war after the fateful Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor on December 7th. How unprepared the country was for the emergency of war was evident when by December 29th the Borough was appointing an Automobile Tire Rationing Board consisting of Max Muschick, Dave Warden, Joseph Gereghty, Hugo Holthausen, John Klein and John J. Andrejewski, Jr. John J. McCutcheon, local merchant, was appointed Chairman of the Local Defense Council and was having difficulty in completing the personnel of his various committees.

*Former Officials Pass Away*

The year was not without its sombre incidents on the local scene. The official minutes record the passing of John Hart, its first Chief of Police; John J. Shafer, its former Overseer of the Poor and Walter E. Riddle, long time member of the Board of Education and Postmaster of the Borough at the time of his death.

## Chapter VIII

## JOHN J. CROSS IS SECOND REPUBLICAN MAYOR TO SERVE—1942 and 1943

### 1942

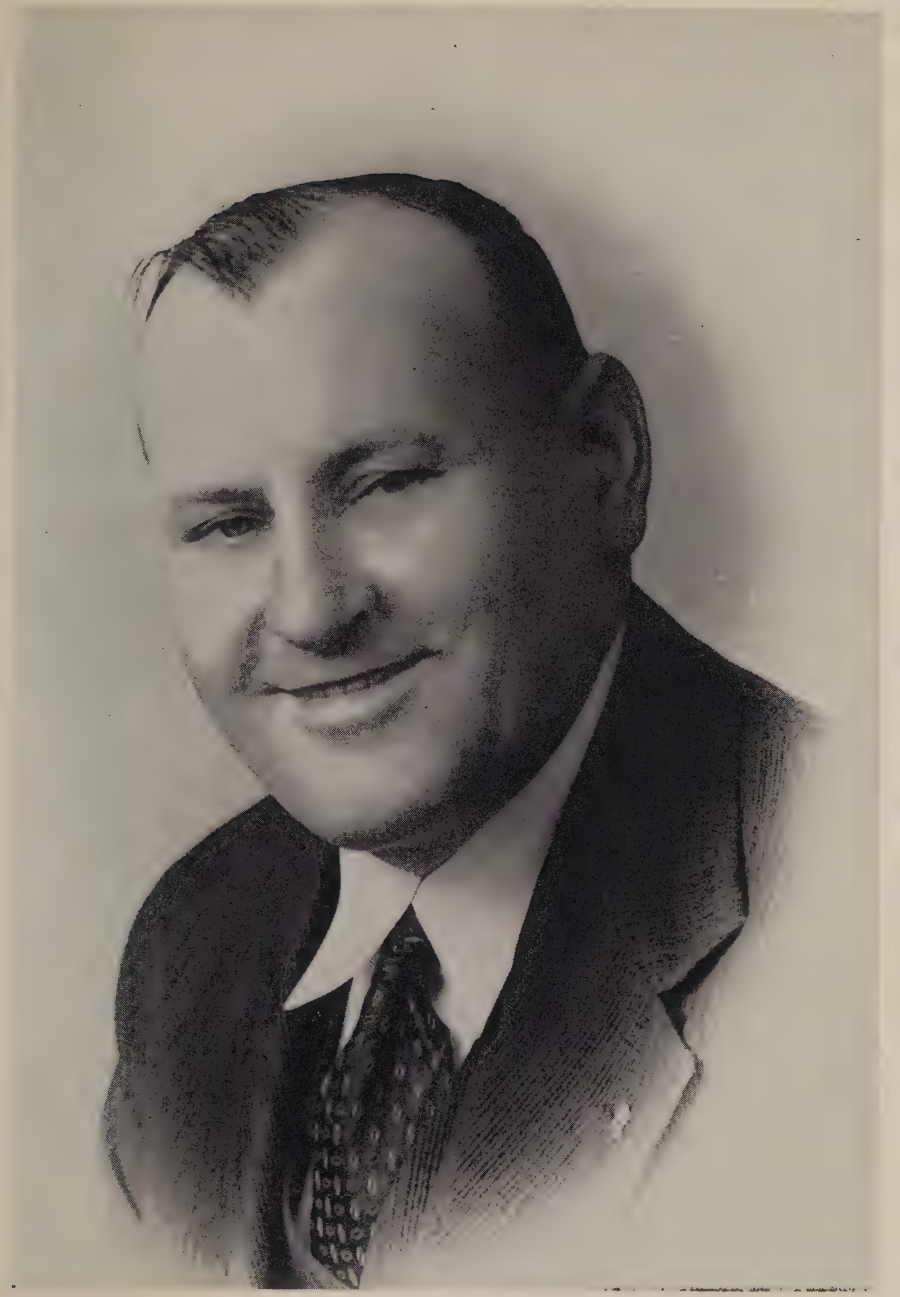
*John J. Cross Second Republican Mayor*

For the second time in the Borough's history a Republican Mayor assumed office on January 1st, 1942 in the person of John J. Cross. Mr. Cross was a promient resident of the Melrose Section of the Borough and was engaged in the structural and ornamental iron and welding business. He had conducted a vigorous campaign and had been successful in defeating the incumbent, Mayor Chevalier.

*Republicans in Minority*

Moreover, another Republican candidate in the person of Andrew Maliszewski was elected to the Council replacing Joseph Gereghty. However, Councilman Rappleyea won reelection. This resulted in a Republican Mayor and a lone Republican Councilman representing the minority on the governing body. Assessor Albert was reelected for 3 years.

Mayor Cross' first annual message contained many recommendations. These included an increase in the size of the Police Department, appointment of a Zoning Commission, purchase of new fire trucks and the construction of a hospital and post office.



MAYOR JOHN J. CROSS—1942 and 1943.

MUNICIPAL BUILDING FROM OCTOBER 1942 TO 1958.

*Republicans Show Desire to Cooperate*

All appointive officials were reappointed without opposition, the Republican minority showing their desire to cooperate in the administration of public affairs. With the country in the throes of war a new standing committee known as the "Defense Council Committee" was created with Councilmen Maliszewski, McCutcheon, and Popowski appointed to serve on it. Indications that the relief problem was still present but in a much reduced degree was evident in the appointment of the Local Assistance Board. The Melrose Hose Company celebrated its 20th Anniversary on February 10th, 1942 at Joseph Jerome's Hall in Melrose.

In February Fred C. Schmitt resigned as Recorder and was succeeded by Thaddeus B. Leszczynski for the balance of the year.

The annual budget of $221,180.00 was adopted. The tax rate was $4.89.

A dog census indicated the canine population at 970.

*World War II Evident in Many Respects*

The impact of World War II on the community was apparent in many respects. The Borough purchased a service flag to be displayed on the municipal building. It had to be large enough to eventually accommodate almost 1,500 service stars. The Borough also established a temporary roll of honor in the entrance hall of the old Municipal Building to be replaced by monument and bronze plaque later. The Canal Street area and Lower Main Street area dedicated and displayed service flags for their own sections of the Borough.

*General MacArthur Honored—*
*Shade Tree Committee*

On May 6th the Borough became one of the first communities in the nation to dedicate a street in honor of General MacArthur. By ordinance No. 508, sponsored by Councilman Rappleyea, it changed the name of Sandfield Road to MacArthur Avenue.

The Mayor appointed new members to the Shade Tree Commission. These consisted of Harry McLaughlin, George K. Nickel, Joseph Lagoda, E. F. Lockhart, D. Herbert Davis and William Steveson.

*Standing Committees Required to Meet Regularly*

On June 3rd the Borough took a very forward looking prodecural step when for the first time it adopted a resolution formally requiring that all standing committees meet regularly in conference the evening before the regular council meetings. Thus they put into effect the well established procedure used so effectively in the State and National legislature where the standing committees do much of the ground work before the legislative body is called upon to act on pending legislation. This did much to eliminate the wrangling and confusion and loss of time and efficiency which had marred many of the prior meetings of the governing body.

*Pvt. Felix J. Delikat World War II Casualty*

On October 7th the Borough passed a Resolution of Sympathy with respect to Pvt. Felix J. Delikat, one of the Borough's first casualties of World War II.

*Move to New Council Chambers*

Also, on October 7th the new Municipal Building was completed and the governing body conducted open house for the public. The days set for public inspection were Saturday, October 17th and Sunday, October 18th.

On October 21st the governing body first met in the old Council Chambers of the municipal building and moved to adjourn their meeting to the new quarters in the new Municipal Building.

Detailed resolutions were adopted assigning the various quarters in the new Municipal Building to the various departments. However, the exigencies of the period resulted in several changes. The Defense Council were assigned temporarily to the Mayor's Office and the Conference Room. The Local Rationing Board took over the office originally assigned to the Borough Attorney.

*Settlement on Delinquent Taxes Authorized*

Probably one of the most significant and important developments in the Borough's history occurred at the December 2nd meeting. A resolution was formally adopted authorizing the settlement of all delinquent tax claims against the Sayre & Fisher Brick Company. Much of these taxes had accumulated at or about the time the company got into financial difficulties in 1934 and went into reorganization in the Federal courts. The total claim approximated $180,000 of which about $55,000 represented interest alone.

The settlement was an ingenious one and was beneficial to both the industry and the Borough. Normally a municipality considers itself fortunate to collect the

principal only when the principal arrearages are so substantial. However, under the terms of this settlement the Borough collected all of its principal obligations and a substantial portion of the interest as well. The principal point in the compromise was an agreement by the Borough to accept 40 acres of land owned by the company and adjacent to the Borough Hall in satisfaction of $25,000 of the accrued interest.

Thus the Borough acquired the 40 acre tract which it later developed into one of the most modern municipal parks in the area.

It afforded not only ample room for off street parking lots, playgrounds, athletic fields and municipal stadia but sorely needed land upon which to construct a new Municipal Building and all additions that might be required in the foreseeable future.

## 1943

### *Mayor Cross' 2nd Year—No Opposition to Appointments*

1943 marked the second and final year of service of John J. Cross as Mayor of Sayreville.

In the preceding November Councilmen Boehm and Popowski were elected, Boehm for his third term and Popowski for his second term. The sole minority member of the Council continued to be Andrew Maliszewski. Wilbur D. Rappleyea was selected as President of the Council for the ensuing year.

In the Mayor's Annual Message he observed that the onset of the war at the end of 1941 had prevented the realization of many of the objectives set forth in his message but that he was hopeful that some of them would be achieved in 1943.

All appointive municipal officials were reappointed without opposition. These included Joseph Yanas as Inspector of the Water Department; Richard Skehan and John Markulic as Desk Clerks and Hugh Singleton and Alfred Schussler as members of the Board of Health.

*Modzelewski Appointed Recorder*

A new figure appeared in the official family of the Borough with the appointment of Edward A. Modzelewski who was appointed to serve as Recorder for the year 1943. A native of Sayreville he had been recently admitted to the Bar. The governing body followed its past practice of recognizing and honoring local men who were qualified to hold public office. Judge Modzelewski has continued to serve in this capacity with ability and distinction up to and including the present date.

*Local Women Enlist in Armed Forces*

Overtones of the war and of the extent of national mobilization appeared in the minutes of January 20th when the governing body paid tribute to several local women who had enlisted in the Armed Services of the country. These included Anne Walus, Marie Erickson, Margaret Armstrong and Rose Schurich.

*Different Format for Budget*

Early in February the local budget was adopted as usual. However, it was set up in a somewhat different format than in former years. It included not only monies appropriated to defray the cost of local gov-

ernment but the amount which would be raised for school and county tax purposes as well. The total of all appropriations amounted to $743,151.00.

*New Police Personnel*

Early in the year the governing body decided to increase the membership of the Local Police Department from 9 members to 11 members. The initial resolution was approved on first reading on February 3rd and on second and final reading on February 17th. On April 7th Mayor Cross appointed E. Melvin Hartman and John Markulic as new Patrolmen. The Police Department was further supplemented by the appointment of former Councilman James T. Creamer and Henry Holthausen, local retired merchant, as Desk Clerks. Later in the year it was further supplemented by the appointment of George Garbowski and Philip Farley as Desk Clerks.

*War Bonds Purchased*

During the course of the year the Borough showed its patriotism as well as its business acumen by the purchase of approximately $100,000 of U. S. War Bonds. In addition to supporting the nation financially this purchase assured a substantial rate in the way of interest on Borough funds which might otherwise remain idle and unproductive. This is a procedure originally recommended by Treasurer Joseph J. Weber which has more or less continued to the present date. Over the years it has netted substantial return of revenue to the Borough, running into many thousands of dollars.

*Melrose Service Flag Dedicated*

On September 1st the governing body accepted an invitation from the Melrose Section to attend the dedication of its Service Flag and Honor Roll listing the names of its residents in the Armed Services, to be held on Sunday, September 5th. At the same meeting the Borough Council received word that Recorder Modzelewski had been inducted into the Army as of September 9th and that he was resigning as Recorder effective at once.

*Central Planning Board Created*

On October 20th the Borough adopted one of the most forward looking pieces of legislation in a number of years. It was Ordinance No. 512 creating a Central Planning Board to consist of 7 or 9 members. Although adopted on final reading and the members were appointed it remained more or less in a state of somnolence for a number of years before the post-war problems galvanized it into action.

*Mayor Cross Unable to Continue as Chief Executive*

The latter part of the year was saddened by the serious illness of Mayor Cross which prevented him from continuing his duties as Mayor. As a result, Councilman Rappleyea as President of the Council had cast upon him the duty of presiding at most of the meetings during October, November and December. The governing body showed its respect and admiration for Mayor Cross by the adoption of a resolution on December 15th expressing sincere regret at his illness

and incapacity and expressing hope for his speedy recovery.

*Death of Servicemen and Public Officials Noted*

The year was also marred by the death of three Sayreville boys serving in the Armed Forces in the person of Ellsworth Johnson, Jr., Louis Ciecko and Alexander Sosnowitz. The year also marked the passing of John Shuler, former Republican Councilman and James F. Creamer, former Desk Clerk, Postmaster and Democratic Councilman.

MAYOR PHILIP McCUTCHEON—1944 to 1949.

## Chapter IX

## McCUTCHEON'S TERMS COVER SIX YEAR POST-WAR ERA—1944 to 1949

### 1944

*Philip McCutcheon New Mayor*

On January 1, 1944 Philip McCutcheon took office as Mayor of the Borough. He had previously served six years as Councilman. Alfred W. Schussler of the Morgan Section of the Borough took Mr. McCutcheon's place as a councilmanic candidate, with Councilman Buchanan as his running mate, both of whom were elected. Except for these two changes the governing body remained the same, with Andrew Maliszewski the sole minority member.

Mayor McCutcheon's First Annual Message recommended the dedication of the 40-acre tract adjacent to the Borough Hall acquired from the Sayre & Fisher Brick Company, as War Memorial Park to honor the veterans of World Wars I and II.

*Thompson Recorder—Popowski*
*President of Council*

There were no significant changes in the appointed municipal officials, practically all of whom were reappointed. The only change was the appointment of Thomas O. Thompson, former Councilman and

Mayor, as Borough Recorder. Councilman Popowski was selected to serve as President of the Council.

At the first regular meeting on January 5th Councilman Schussler submitted his resignation as a member of the Board of Health. In his place the Mayor appointed Joseph F. Gereghty, former Councilman, and also a resident of the Morgan Section.

*War Memorial Park Dedicated—*
*Shade Tree Commission*

That the governing body agreed with the Mayor's recommendation regarding War Memorial Park was demonstrated when at the second regular meeting of the year, on January 19th, a resolution was duly adopted dedicating the park as "War Memorial Park." In the intervening years it has been developed into one of the finest recreation centers in Central Jersey.

On February 2nd an ordinance was adopted confirming the existence of the Shade Tree Commission, which heretofore had functioned only under the authority of a resolution. Commission members appointed were: Harry McLaughlin, Joseph Lagoda and George K. Nickel.

*Budget and Tax Rate Decreased*

On February 23rd the overall budget for the year 1944 was adopted. It amounted to $624,257.50. The tax rate was estimated at $4.47.

On May 3rd Mary C. Guilfoyle was appointed to serve as Deputy Borough Clerk in addition to her duties as Welfare Director.

On June 7th contract was awarded for the purchase of a new Buffalo Fire Engine, at a cost of $8,660. On

June 21st, 33 tavern licenses were renewed by resolution.

*Test Well Sunk on Bissett Tract*

On September 6th, contract was awarded for the sinking of an 8 inch Test Well on the Bissett Tract. This was Sayreville's second try at developing its own water supply. Unfortunately, the right granted by the State Water Policy Commission to divert a million gallons per day from deep wells in the Farrington Sands on the Journee Mill Road Tract had been permitted by the Borough to lie dormant for so many years that the state revoked the grant. The Borough was now required to resort to the shallow sands in the Bissett Tract for development of its water supply. However, after the Test Wells were sunk no further action was taken in the development of a water system until approximately twelve years later when the advent of many new housing developments and the increased requirements of the industrial plants in the area threatened the section with a water shortage.

*"General Welcome Home Committee" Appointed*

The official minutes of the meeting of September 20th indicate that the Borough anticipated the cessation of hostilities. Following the surrender of the Japs Mayor McCutcheon appointed a committee of prominent citizens to be known as the "General Welcome Home Committee" with the Mayor acting as Honorary Chairman.

On October 4th, after repeated requests from the Borough, the county government took over the Journee Mill Road as part of the county road system.

*Patrick F. McCutcheon Dies*

The year was marked by the passing of Patrick F. McCutcheon, long a well known figure in the public life of the community. He had conducted a General Store for many years. He had also served as Tax Assessor of the Township. But the post with which he was most prominently identified was that of Clerk of the Board of Health and Registrar of Vital Statistics, in which capacity he served for more than a quarter of a century.

*Many Local Boys Die in Service*

The heavy toll of life taken in World War II was reflected in the resolutions of sympathy adopted on the death of local boys who died in service. These included: Joseph A. Liszka, Joseph W. Kielian, Joseph G. Gondek, Leon P. Maciorowski, John Kravchenok, James J. Glynn, Samuel T. Kulas, Fred A. Wodarczyk, Joseph Schultz, Chester E. Zaleski, Joseph J. Plewa, Peter P. Kwitkowski, Peter J. Solook, Anthony P. Wisz, James J. Smith, John J. Tripsovsky.

## 1945

*Governing Body Remains Same*

1945 marked Philip McCutcheon's second year as Mayor. In the preceding November Republican Councilman Maliszewski and Democratic Councilman Rappleyea had both been reelected, thus retaining the existing political division on the Council. Maliszewski remained the sole Republican.

The Mayor's Message commented on the fact that

there were now more than 1,300 of the Borough's young men and women in the Armed Forces; that the Planning Board had begun to function; that the financial condition of the Borough was sound and that progress was being made on the development of War Memorial Park.

*Few Changes in Appointments*

At the Organization Meeting on January 1st there were few changes in the appointments of municipal officials. Thomas O. Thompson was reappointed as Recorder, Kate Shafer as Overseer of the Poor and John J. Kierst and Frederick Schmitt were appointed to the Board of Health.

On February 28th the Annual Budget was adopted. It totalled $693,112.00. The estimated tax rate was $4.60.

*Tax Liens Sold to J. E. Burke Co.—*
*Salaries for Officials*

On June 6th the Borough sold its accumulated tax liens on the old Chemicals, Inc. property to the J. E. Burke Co. of Fondulac, Wisconsin, for $5,300. Burke was engaged in the manufacture of equipment for playgrounds and athletic fields and planned to open a branch here. However, he subsequently resold the property to a chemical concern. It has since been sold and resold several times but is presently in operation as a chemical plant.

On July 6th the governing body for the first time adopted a resolution providing for nominal salaries for the members. These were fixed at $500. per annum for the Mayor and $300. per annum for each

Councilman. This was subject to approval by referendum and was subsequently approved at the General Election in November.

*End of World War II Celebrated*

The Borough took formal notice of the end of World War II by means of a Proclamation proclaiming August 15th and August 16th as holidays for the Borough of Sayreville to celebrate the end of the war.

By this time the Borough had more than $200,000. of Borough funds invested in United States War Bonds.

*Local Civilian Defense Council Terminated*

On November 21st the Mayor issued another Proclamation declaring the national emergency had terminated and that the continued maintenance and operation of the Local Civilian Defense Council was no longer necessary and should cease and terminate December 31, 1945. However, this termination was short lived because it had to be revived a few years later because of the "cold war."

*Property Allocated for Public Use—Police Return*

On December 5th the governing body canvassed all of the property which it had acquired through tax foreclosures and specifically reserved allocated premises for future public use. These included a number of parcels subsequently converted into playgrounds, as well as sites for the construction of both the Jesse Selover and Emma L. Arleth Schools.

Police Officers Fred Weischadle and Melvin Hartman having served their full time in the United States

Armed Forces, were discharged and reported back for service on the police force.

*Many More Die Serving Country*

Among local boys who died in action or while in active service in the Armed Forces in the year 1945 were: William R. Creamer, Joseph A. Roginski, Frank Schultz, Robert W. Nickel, Calvin Hutson, Samuel Rodio, Joseph Mochen, Andrew J. Seaman, Walter E. Swider, Michael Zaunerowicz, Frank (Joseph) Czaplinski, John F. Defort, Robert D. Wilmot, Raymond Miara, John Edward Scheid, Aloysius Schmitt, Peter R. Steigel, Joseph F. Mioduski, Warren Robbins.

## 1946

*McCutcheon Begins Second Term*

On January 1st Philip McCutcheon began his third year as Mayor. Having completed his first two year term he had been reelected for a second two year term in the prior November election. Veteran Councilman J. Henry Boehm had decided to retire from active politics after 25 years of service. In his place the Democrats nominated Fred C. Muth of the Morgan Section. Muth and his running mate, Councilman Popowski, were elected with McCutcheon. Thus the balance of power remained as in the previous year. Andrew Maliszewski again was the sole representative of the minority party. Councilman Buchanan was elected to serve as President of the Council.

*Mayor Submits 10-Point Program*

The Mayor's message commended the Planning Board for their work particularly for their recommendations that a Zoning Ordinance and Building Code be adopted. The highlight of the message was a ten-point program which he recommended to the Planning Board for study. These points included:

1. Creation of a local Industrial Commission to locate and attract desirable industries.
2. Expansion and completion of a system of Borough Parks and Playgrounds in all seven sections of the Borough.
3. Erection or purchase of a Borough owned Community House to develop and promote a better Community spirit.
4. Creation of a year-around program of Borough wide social activities for our younger men and women.
5. Establishment of organized and directed play groups for children, segregated into three or four age groups.
6. Programs for Borough beautification.
7. Establishment of Sayreville's own water supply system.
8. Sanitary sewerage facilities for the Melrose and Morgan Sections.
9. Encouragement of several modest sized housing projects in the Borough to afford adequate housing for our present and future population.
10. Early development of War Memorial Park.

*Modzelewski Returns from Active Service*

There were few if any changes in the appointment of municipal officials. Hugh Singleton and Joseph

Gereghty were given additional three year terms on the Board of Health. Edward Modzelewski, having returned from active service in the Army, was reappointed to his former position as Recorder. Thomas O. Thompson retired as Acting Recorder.

Early in the year the official minutes recorded the death of two additional local members of the Armed Service, Anthony M. Genus and Stephen F. Gwizdak.

In February the annual budget amounting to $696,-799.50 was adopted.

### *Utilities Extended to All Parts of the Borough in Million Dollar Program*

For a number of months residents of the Melrose Section appeared at various council meetings demanding extension of sanitary sewage facilities. The governing body finally capitulated to their insistent petitions. The Engineer and Attorney were directed to proceed with the necessary plans and specifications, bond ordinances, etc. State Board of Health was petitioned for the issuance of a "Certificate of Necessity" permitting the Borough to exceed its bonded indebtedness for this purpose.

Not only was the Melrose Section included in this program but the Morgan, Bayview Manor, Ernston Road and Roses Corner Sections were likewise included. The program permitted the extension of these facilities to every section of the 16 square miles of the Borough. Before it was finished it was to cost in excess of a million dollars. However, it laid the groundwork for a rapid post-war expansion of the Borough which doubled its population and substantially increased its tax ratables within a relatively few years.

On April 17th Section 2 of Sayreville's first post-

war development was approved covering Section 2 of Munn Estates.

At mid-year approximately 40 tavern licenses were issued and approved for the coming year.

*Zoning Commission Appointed*

On July 3rd the Mayor appointed and the council confirmed the following members constituting the Borough's Zoning Commission to draft a Zoning Ordinance: Fred C. Muth, Philip McCutcheon, Alex Loniewski, Edwin F. Lockhart, Robert Mcfarlan, J. G. Christfield, Andrew Malik, Wilbur D. Rappleyea and Karl H. Wilber. However, so many disputes arose with reference to the type of zoning to create and the boundaries to be established that it was almost 7 years later before a zoning ordinance was actually adopted.

*Return of Servicemen and Women Celebrated*

By appropriate proclamation the Mayor proclaimed and the governing body confirmed the declaration of a 3 day holiday to run from August 15th to August 18th to honor the returning servicemen and women who by this time had reached approximately 1500 in number. An elaborate committee was appointed with the Mayor and Council and Freeholder Dolan serving as the General Chairman.

The committee worked out a suitable program commencing with the usual parade through the principal streets and ending with memorial services in the Colony Theatre to honor its boys from the Borough who had died in the service.

*48 Local Boys Died in Service*

The names of those who died in the service are as follows: Louis M. Ciecko, William R. Creamer, Frank (Joseph) Czaplinski, John F. Defort, Felix J. Delikat, Francis Fabiszewski, Anthony M. Genus, James J. Glynn, Joseph G. Gondek, Stephen F. Gwizdak, Calvin Hutson, Ellsworth Johnson, Joseph W. Kielian, John Kravchenok, Samuel T. Kulas, Peter P. Kwitkowski, Joseph A. Liszka, Leon P. Maciorowski, Raymond Miara, Joseph Francis Mioduski, Joseph Mochen, Robert W. Nickel, Charles F. Piech, Joseph J. Plewa, Joseph Prusakowski, Warren P. Robbins, Samuel Rodio, Joseph A. Roginski, John F. Rosinski, John Edward Scheid, Aloysius Schmitt, Frank Schultz, Joseph Schultz, Andrew J. Seaman, Richard L. Seidler, Frank J. Slesinski, James J. Smith, Peter J. Solook, Alex Sosnowitz, Peter Stegiel, Walter E. Swider, John Tripsovsky, Rudolph M. Truchan, Robert D. Wilmot, Anthony P. Wisz, Fred A. Wodarczyk, Chester E. Zaleski and Michael Zaunerowicz.

*Souvenir Booklets Distributed*

To commemorate the affair the Borough authorized the printing and distribution of souvenir booklets. These contained a history of the creation and dedication of War Memorial Park; War Memorial Monument with an alphabetical list of all men and women in the service; as well as a list of those who had died in the service.

*Hercules Powder Co. Helps Meet Housing Shortage*

In the fall of 1946 the Hercules Powder Co. took

steps to meet the housing shortage which had become acute with the return of the veterans. Lots adjacent to their property were acquired, streets laid out in the old grid fashion were vacated and new modern streets including Milliken Road, Ridge Road, etc., were laid out and the Company began construction of some 30 additional homes. This was the Borough's second post war housing development.

In November the Borough adopted a Resolution of Sympathy marking the death of former Mayor John J. Cross. The governing body served as honorary pallbearers.

*Police Department Rules and Regulations Revised*

The Council wound up the year by adopting a completely revised set of rules and regulations covering the Police Department and by consenting to the establishment of the President Park Independent Fire Company to furnish fire protection for that section of the Borough.

## 1947

*Mayor McCutcheon Begins Fourth Year*

Philip McCutcheon began his fourth year as Mayor on January 1st, 1947. At the prior November election Councilmen Buchanan and Schussler had both been reelected for additional three year terms. Councilman Rappleyea was elected as President of the Council.

*Mayor's Fourth Annual Message*

The Mayor presented his fourth annual message in which he commented on the return of many veterans

to civilian life and on his recommendations to the Planning Board of a 10-point program upon which he had received no progress report as yet. He also commented on the development of War Memorial Park, on the program being conducted to sell home sites to returning veterans at modest prices and on the progress of the Melrose Sewer Project. He also welcomed to the Borough the latest large industry, the Owens Illinois Glass Company which had just completed a new plant on Journee Mill Road.

*All Officials Reappointed*

All appointive municipal officials were reappointed without contest. One new position appeared, i.e., Custodian of Parks and Playgrounds and Joseph Bailey, Jr., was appointed to this position. Edwin J. Baumann and Fred Schmitt were given additional three year terms on the Board of Health.

*Issuance of Building Permits Now Required*

On January 22nd the Borough adopted its first resolution requiring the issuance of building permits so that it would have some record of building construction which was going on in the Borough. However, no fees were required and the duty of issuing the pro forma permits to all applicants without restriction as to the type or location of buildings, or payment of fees was assigned to Borough Clerk Kolb.

*Development of War Memorial Park Continues—Other Items*

Early in February the annual budget of $717,420.18

was adopted. Later in the spring evidence of the continued development of War Memorial Park became apparent. Dolan Street which was previously a dead-end street was extended along the edge of the park property out to MacArthur Avenue. The Veterans of Foreign Wars were given a plot of land 100 x 150 out of the park property upon which to construct their headquarters. Oscar Anderson replaced Henry Holthausen as custodian of the Municipal Building upon the latter's death.

By the end of June the total liquor licenses issued by the Borough had climbed to 50.

*Inflation Evident*

Signs of the beginning of post-war inflation became evident when on July 16th the Borough paid $13,000. for a new fire engine furnished by Maxim Motor Co. Later the governing body authorized the expenditure of $7,500. to renovate and improve the fire house of Engine Company No. 1 which housed this apparatus.

*Allgair Developments*

On August 6th the Borough approved the extension of Third Street off Boehmhurst Avenue known as Allgair Terrace. This was the beginning of the Borough's third post-war housing development. This was a development conducted by John A. Allgair prominent local merchant and real estate developer. It was later known as Birchwood Terrace and approximated 73 homes. Thereafter Allgair completed another development known as Town Square which consisted of approximately 30 homes.

*Off-Street Parking Lot*

On September 3rd the Borough leased from Henry Albert and wife a plot of land at Miller's Corner for off street parking purposes. Sayreville was later to become one of the leading municipalities in this program, designed to relieve traffic congestion on the streets and afford a service and convenience to the travelling public by providing adequate off street parking facilities.

*Public Approves Adoption of Retirement System*

At the November election the public voted approval 818 for and 391 against the adoption of the State Employees Retirement System for local municipal employees. On November 5th the governing body accepted the dedication of Price Street in the Parlin Section. This resulted in the construction of approximately 30 or 40 additional homes on this street by private individuals within the following year or two.

The year ended with definite evidence that a post-war boom had set in which was to greatly change the size and characteristics of this growing community.

## 1948

*McCutcheon Begins Third Term with Same Council Members*

This year marked the beginning of Mayor McCutcheon's third term of office. At the general election in the preceding November Maliszewski and Rappleyea had again been reelected thus maintaining the same balance of power on the Council. Fred C. Muth was

selected as President of the Council for the ensuing year.

All appointed officials were reappointed without incident.

*Mayor's Message Comments on 25 Years of Service by Joseph J. Weber*

It also marked the reelection of Joseph J. Weber as Collector and Treasurer for another full term. In the Mayor's annual message he commented on this fact and paid special tribute to Weber observing that at the conclusion of his term he would have served over 25 years in this post rendering invaluable service to the community. He also credited Weber with having contributed in large measure to the excellent financial condition of the Borough through his advice and guidance.

Among other items touched upon in the Mayor's Message was a recommendation that a two way radio be installed in all fire and police equipment; that vacancies in the police department be filled by competitive examination; that the Borough donate a site for the headquarters of the Old Bridge Veterans Organization and that the Borough continue its program of offering home sites to veterans at nominal prices through the sale of tax foreclosed property.

*Former Borough Attorney James V. Burke Dies*

The Borough was saddened early in the year by the sudden death of James V. Burke who had served the Borough as Borough Attorney for a number of years and had also served as a member of the local Board

of Education for a number of years. He was a native and lifelong resident of the Borough, the son of William Burke, a former Township Committeeman and had practiced law in Sayreville from his admission to the Bar until the date of his death.

In February the annual budget of $810,012.48 was adopted. The estimated tax rate was $4.91.

*New Streets Make Way for New Homes*

Early in the year it was evident that the housing boom was beginning to make itself felt in the Borough. Standiford Street, LaVerne Street as well as Ninth Street, Clay St. and Heston Avenue were accepted and approved and many of these were rapidly filled up with new homes.

By June 1948 the number of tavern licenses had climbed to 57 plus 6 Plenary Retail Distribution licenses. On July 7th a Municipal Highway Traffic Coordinating Committee was appointed consisting of Chief of Police Gross, Councilman Rappleyea and Engineer Wilber.

*Municipal Court Established—*
*Magistrate Dons Robe*

The adoption of the new State Constitution the preceding year and the reorganization of the Courts at the municipal level also had its local effect on the Borough. On October 6th Ordinance No. 546 was adopted which established a municipal court and changed the title of the presiding official from Recorder to Magistrate. In due course Magistrate Modzelewski was formally inducted into his new office and presented a judicial gown with appropriate ceremonies.

*Code to Prevent Disorderly Conduct, Etc.*

In the field of law enforcement the Borough showed its leadership by adopting Ordinance No. 547 on October 6th which was a compilation of many regulatory ordinances which in effect provided a code to prevent disorderly conduct, eliminate nuisances, preserve public peace, etc. This ordinance proved so forward looking that many other municipalities in the state patterned their own regulatory ordinances on it.

*First Housing Development by Professional Developers*

On November 3rd the Borough approved for filing purposes only a development known as Bellray Homes Inc. This was the first of a series of housing developments to be undertaken by professional developers in the Borough. It was located on the south side of Lower Main Street embracing Miller, Marsh and Forrest Avenues and before it was completed approximately 80 homes had been constructed.

This was followed shortly and on December 15th by MacArthur Manor. This was also a housing development undertaken by professional developers. Located on the easterly side of MacArthur Avenue it consisted originally of only about 34 homes, however, it was later expanded and its name changed to Pershing Park and approximately 140 additional homes of a larger and more attractive type were constructed.

*George Gross and William F. Albert Pass On*

The year ended on a somber note much as it had commenced. This was due to the death of two promi-

nent public officials, namely, Chief of Police George Gross in November and Assessor William F. Albert the same month. Both had long been identified with the public life of the community. Gross was first appointed to the Police Department on August 13th, 1918 and became chief of the Department in August of 1923. He thus had served in the Police Department for over 30 years and as its Chief for over 25 years.

Mr. Albert a building contractor by calling had served as tax assessor for a number of years. He was the son of Mr. and Mrs. William Albert, Sr., who were early pioneers in the settlement of the Borough. The governing body formally mourned the passing of these two men as valued and esteemed citizens who during their lifetime exemplified the highest standards of citizenship and civic worth.

## 1949

### *McCutcheon's Final Year as Mayor*

1949 marked Mayor McCutcheon's final year of service as Chief Executive of the Borough. At the preceding general election in November Fred C. Muth had been displaced by another Democrat, Raymond Presnal, who ran against him in the primaries. The election of Popowski and Presnal to the Council resulted in a retention of the same balance of power as heretofore. Popowski was elected President of the Council for the ensuing year.

At the first meeting in February Captain Harry Olsen was elevated to the post of Chief for a 6 month probationary period. At its expiration he received permanent appointment.

On February 16th the Council increased the size of

the Police Department by providing for 3 additional members. Also on the same date Resolutions of Sympathy on the death of former Councilman Joseph Bailey, Sr., and former Desk Clerk John H. Weck were adopted.

On February 23rd the local budget amounting to $913,791.25 was adopted. The tax rate was estimated at $4.98.

*Planning Board Still Working on Zoning Ordinance*

On March 16th Adolph Schmitt was appointed a member of the Planning Board. Some time previous Thomas O. Thompson had also been appointed as a member of this Board which was still studying the need for a Zoning Ordinance, Building Code, etc.

On April 6th the Borough observed the passing of one of its veteran police officers in the person of John Visneiski. At the same time that it filled this vacancy it filled the 3 additional positions created by resolution. The new appointees were Vincent Lasko, Chester O'Such, William Minnick and Raymond Sweeney.

*President Park Firehouse Dedicated*

On May 18th the Council received notice of the formal dedication of the Fire House of the President Park Independent Fire Company to be held on May 29th, 1949. Not only had the governing body ratified the creation of this independent company but had aided it by donating land for its headquarters and transferred title to a Dodge fire engine formerly used by the Morgan Fire Company.

*"Cold War" Starts*

Evidence of the onset of the cold war appeared in the official minutes of June 1st. A communication was received from Leonard Dreyfuss, Director of N. J. Civil Defense requesting the local Board to appoint a Civil Defense Chairman. As a consequence John J. McCutcheon who had served in the post during World War II was recalled to active duty and appointed Director. Councilman Andrew Maliszewski assumed the Chairmanship of the Council's Standing Committee on Civil Defense.

*4 Patrolmen Elevated to Sergeants*

On June 15th four patrolmen were elevated to the post of Sergeant. These included Jacob Frischknecht, John Rhatican, Joseph Fritz and Neil Chevalier.

On July 6th the Borough extended its acquisition of off street parking lots by accepting an offer from Mr. and Mrs. Joseph T. Karcher for the use of land on upper Main Street opposite Our Lady of Victories Church. On the same date the Borough designated Veterans' Pathway through Memorial Park. On the preceding Memorial Day 62 trees had been planted along this pathway in memory of the local men who had lost their lives in World Wars I and II.

*More Streets Accepted*

The continued growth of the Borough was indicated as the Borough accepted the following streets in the course of the year: Parker Avenue, George Street Extension, Roma Street, Terrace Place, Stevens Avenue and others.

*Popowski Resigns as Councilman*

Anthony J. Popowski submitted his resignation as Councilman at the year's end to take effect at 12 noon January 2nd, 1950 at which time he would take office as the newly elected Mayor of the Borough. McCutcheon after serving four years had indicated a preference for the post of Tax Assessor, a vacancy created by the death of William Albert. Borough Engineer Karl Wilber had served as Acting Assessor in the interim.

ARCHITECT'S RENDERING OF NEW MUNICIPAL BUILDING WITH TWO WINGS (one to accommodate Free Public Library). COMPLETED IN 1958.

MAYOR ANTHONY J. POPOWSKI—1950 to 1957.

## Chapter X

# POPOWSKI'S EIGHT YEARS AS MAYOR— 1950 to 1957

## 1950

### *Popowski Becomes Mayor*

Anthony J. Popowski began his first year of service as Mayor on January 1, 1950. Philip McCutcheon had given up the mayoralty to seek election as Tax Assessor. Councilman Buchanan and Schussler had sought reelection. The entire ticket was elected. However, the promotion of Popowski to Mayor left a vacancy. At the Organization Meeting on January 2nd local building contractor Alex Loniewski was appointed for one year of the unexpired term of the Mayor. Mr. McCutcheon was likewise given a temporary appointment as Tax Assessor pending the formal commencement of the term of office for which he was elected.

### *Joseph J. Weber Voted Tenure*

Probably one of the most significant events in the preceding election was the granting of tenure of office to Joseph J. Weber as Tax Collector and Treasurer of the Borough. Under a recently enacted statute tenure could be granted provided it was approved by referendum. Mr. Weber received a substantial vote of confidence at the polls and thereby acquired tenure as of January 1, 1950.

Early in February the Annual Budget amounting to $941,973.54 was adopted. The tax rate was estimated at $4.88.

*DuPont and Hercules Villages Sold by Companies*

Significant changes were taking place in the sections of the Borough known as the DuPont and Hercules Villages. Both companies had decided to divest themselves of title to these groups of residences and to sell them to their employees at modest prices. The official minutes of the municipality reflected this procedure when maps showing the street layouts of the two villages were approved and filed on February 15th.

*Allgair Off-Street Parking Lot*

On April 5th the Borough acquired its first off-street parking lot by purchase, when it bought the plot at the rear of the Allgair Hotel property. While still not utilized as fully as was expected, it will always be available for the convenience of the business center of the Borough when and if the same develops as is anticipated.

*Utilities Extended to Morgan and Bay View Manor*

The long awaited commencement of work on the extension of sanitary sewage facilities to the Morgan and Bay View Manor Sections finally got under way on April 19th. Contract for the Treatment Plant was awarded to S. T. Peterson & Co. Inc. of Princeton, N. J., at approximately $160,000. Work of installing the various mains was subsequently let to Guy Villa

& Sons for an additional $160,000. Thus this project covering this area alone totalled about $320,000.

*South Amboy Explosion*

Official notice of the so-called South Amboy explosion disaster was made a matter of record by a special meeting called by the Mayor on May 24th. This incident was reminiscent of the explosion of the Morgan Shell Loading Plant in that area in 1918 during World War I. In this case, train loads of land mines and other explosives on tracks adjacent to the South Amboy waterfront, awaiting trans shipment via lighters to cargo vessels lying off shore, exploded, wreaking havoc over a wide area. Many lives were lost, a number of people injured and millions of dollars of property damage was incurred within a radius of ten miles or more from the site of the explosion.

*Housing Boom Reaching Crest*

Signs that the housing or building boom was reaching its crest in this area was apparent on all sides. In the course of the year between 15 and 20 separate streets in various sections of the Borough were either approved or accepted. The building of new homes by old and new residents was going on at a rapid pace in all areas of the Borough.

On August 16th contract for the installation of modern up-to-date two-way radio system between police headquarters and the police prowl cars was awarded to Motorola, Inc. at $2,170.00.

*United Nations Flag Presentation—Other Items*

Current activities of the United Nations became a matter of local record on October 25th. On that date Mrs. Frances Lytkowski presented a United Nations Flag to the governing body on behalf of the Sayreville Women's Democratic Organization. A brief but impressive ceremony was conducted, addresses delivered and musical selections rendered.

The year was marked by the passing of two men who had served the Borough in the capacity of Road Supervisor, namely Casper Shuler and Yep Floystrop.

## 1951

*Popowski Begins Second Year as Mayor*

Mayor Popowski began his second year in office on January 1, 1951. At the preceding election Fred C. Schmitt had replaced Wilbur D. Rappleyea, while Andrew Maliszewski, the lone Republican, had again won reelection. Alex Loniewski had likewise won election to the one-year term which still remained of Popowski's term as Councilman. Loniewski was selected as President of the Council for the year. All existing municipal appointees were reappointed. George Boyler succeeded Yep Floystrop as Road Supervisor.

*Polling Districts Increased to Nine*

Early in the year the governing body increased the polling districts from 7 to 9 because of the increased population and registered vote.

*Budget Exceeds a Million Dollars*

On March 7th the Borough adopted its Annual Budget. For the first time in the history of the Borough it exceeded a million dollars. The exact figure was $1,026,870.03. The tax rate was estimated at $4.92, thus indicating that the asssessed valuations for tax ratables were keeping pace with the growth of the community and the consequent expansion in municipal services.

*John Fritz, Jr., Dies*

On March 21st the governing body adopted a resolution of sympathy on the death of John Fritz, Jr., one of the first Councilmen to serve the Borough.

*Zoning Map and Zoning Ordinance Completed*

On August 1st the Mayor and Council received formal word from the Planning Board that the Zoning Map and Zoning Ordinance were now completed and ready for adoption and requesting a joint conference for August 8th. This ordinance had been pending and under consideration by the Board for approximately seven years.

*Sayreville Fire Department Observes Thirty-Fifth Anniversary*

In August the Sayreville Fire Department observed its 35th Anniversary with an elaborate celebration and parade which included representation from all departments of the Borough Government, as well as many visiting delegations from nearby communities.

*Officer Chris Keegan Retires*

As the year ended Officer Chris Keegan applied for and was granted retirement from the police force. He had originally been appointed on March 6, 1918 and had served for over 30 years as a patrolman.

## 1952

*Mayor Popowski Begins Second Term*

On January 1st, 1952 Mayor Popowski began his second two year term as Mayor. At the preceding election Councilmen Alex Loniewski and Raymond Presnal had been elected for three year terms. The minority party still had only one representative on the Council.

At the organization meeting the Mayor presented his Third Annual Message. He commented on the progress made in the past year which included the erection of many street signs, increasing the election districts from 7 to 9, the building of a Field House in Memorial Park, the reactivation of the Planning Board and numerous other items.

There were no changes in the official appointments. All incumbents were reappointed without incident. Councilman Fred C. Schmitt was selected as President of the Council for the ensuing year.

The cost of government continued to increase, matching the community's growth. However, technical changes in the statutory method of preparing the budget established the annual budget for the year at $726,565.50. The tax rate was estimated at $4.98. The votes cast at the general election were determined

to be 5,400 indicating a progressive growth in population.

*Professional Housing Developers Still Going Strong*

At the February 6th meeting the Borough approved Section 3 of President Park as an addition to the existing President Park development. The municipality was not yet alerted to the financial burdens which follow in the wake of large scale unrestricted housing developments. The municipality had actually sold some 30 acres in this very tract to a professional housing developer. In due course, some 200 new homes were constructed on this site.

At the February 20th meeting a Resolution of Sympathy was adopted in observance of the death of George K. Nickel. One of the first Councilmen in the Borough he had been the local Republican leader for many years as well as an unsuccessful candidate for Mayor. In private life he was personnel manager of the DuPont plant in the Parlin Section.

*Ordinance Regulates Trailer Camps—*
*Zoning Code Submitted*

At the April 2nd meeting in order to prevent an unrestricted influx of tourist trailer or car camps an ordinance was adopted regulating and controlling same. By this time the extra burden on the school system in the municipality from the growth of housing developments was making itself felt. It was believed that trailer camps would impose still further unreasonable burdens on the municipality.

At the following meeting on April 16th the proposed Zoning Code for the Borough was finally submitted to

the governing body by the Planning Board. It was tentatively approved and the Board instructed to conduct public hearings thereon. On June 18th, after competitive examinations held on June 7th the governing body appointed two new members to the Police Department. These were Douglas A. Sprague and Louis E. Hoffman.

*William Chevalier Death a Shock*

In August the Borough was shocked at the sudden and accidental death of former Mayor and former Councilman William Chevalier. An expert electrician he had worked for many years for the Sayre & Fisher Brick Co. and the National Lead Company with high tension wires of all types and was considered an expert in his field. He met his death while installing a low voltage electric service in a private home for a friend.

On September 17th the Borough approved a small sub-division of approximately 65 homes near the South Amboy area called Valley View Terrace.

*Burdens of Unrestricted Housing Developments Realized*

By October 1st the full realization of the burdens which unrestricted housing developments were placing on the Borough was apparently realized. On that date a stop-gap resolution was adopted requiring that in the future all housing developments would be required to open, grade, surface and curb their own streets before such streets would be accepted and that they would likewise be required to install sewer, water and other utilities at their own expense. The need for this legislation was apparent when at the very next meeting 3

additional small sub-divisions were tentatively approved, viz: Haven Village, Ridgeway Terrace and Town Square.

On November 5th permanent legislation to control unrestricted housing developments was adopted in the form of an ordinance giving the Planning Board jurisdiction over the approval of all sub-divisions of land.

At the same meeting the Planning Board submitted a tentative Master Plan and Official Map. The governing body took it under advisement but no further action was taken on it.

*Borough Mourns Loss of Emma Arleth*

Still on the same date the Borough passed a Resolution of Sympathy on the death of Emma Arleth. Miss Arleth had been a teacher and school principal in the Sayreville school system for over 40 years. Later the Board of Education honored her memory by naming one of its new schools in her honor.

## 1953

*Political Complexion Remains Same*

Mayor Popowski began his fourth year as Mayor. At the preceding election Councilmen Buchanan and Schussler had been reelected. There was no change in the political complexion of the Council. Councilman Loniewski was elected as President of the Council. All municipal employees were appointed without incident.

In the Mayor's message he commented on some of the accomplishments of the prior year. These included the erection of a new 430 thousand gallon water tank on Bordentown Turnpike, the adoption of an ordi-

nance prohibiting junkyards and an ordinance imposing entire costs of water and other utilities on housing developers.

In March the annual budget amounting to $821,948.00 was adopted. For the first time in the Borough's history the tax rate exceeded the $5.00 mark at an estimated rate of $5.25. The votes cast were estimated at 4,777.

On May 6th the oft discussed Zoning Ordinance known as No. 608 was finally adopted on second reading and final passage and became law. This was the first Zoning Ordinance in the history of the Borough. At the same meeting the Council passed a Resolution of Sympathy on the death of Katherine Shafer who had served as Overseer of the Poor for many years.

*President Park Section Rapidly Growing*

On May 20th the governing body approved the housing development known as "Hope Homes". This was adjacent to and East of the enlarged President Park development. By the time it was completed it had added 170 new homes to the Borough's growing list of new housing facilities. At the same meeting the development of G. Rueshoff at the rear of President Park was approved. This was relatively small consisting of about 35 homes. At the same meeting Patrolman Fred Weischadle was promoted to Sergeant to fill the vacancy caused by the resignation of Joseph Fritz.

*Building Inspector and Board of Adjustment Appointed*

The adoption of zoning in the Borough created the

need for the establishment of various new administrative boards and officials. On May 20th Stanley B. Kryzanowski was appointed Building and Zoning Inspector to supervise the enforcement of the new Zoning Ordinance.

On the same date a Board of Adjustment was appointed consisting of: Andrew Lytowski, Frederik Ekstrom, Eugene Reilly, Frank Lapa and Edwin Kolodziej. Mr. Kolodziej was also designated as Counsel to the Board of Adjustment and the Planning Board.

*Borough Conveys Title for School Site—Other Items*

On June 17th the Borough conveyed title to property it had acquired by tax foreclosure in the Morgan Section to the Board of Education as the site for the new Jesse Selover School. Simultaneously steps were taken to vacate sections of Grove Street and Jersey Street to enlarge the site for the school.

On August 5th the governing body passed a Resolution of Sympathy on the death of Harry McLaughlin, for many years head of the Sayreville Shade Tree Commission and on the death of Woodrow Haussermann who had died in active service in the Armed Forces in Korea.

On the same date they passed a resolution congratulating Borough Attorney Joseph T. Karcher on his completion of 25 years of active practice at the Bar of the State of New Jersey.

*Deerfield Park Approved*

On August 19th Map of Deerfield Park in the Par-

lin Section was approved. This development consisted of 75 homes in the middle price range. The site of 30 acres had originally been acquired by the Hercules Powder Co. for the construction of garden type apartments for its employees. However, after plans were drawn the costs were found prohibitive, and the company abandoned the idea and sold the land to the developer.

*Mourn Passing of John J. Kierst and Joseph J. Kupsch*

On October 7th the Borough mourned the passing of another former public official in the person of John J. Kierst of the Melrose Section. A Councilman in the early days of the Borough he had later served as a member of the Board of Health and Plumbing Inspector for many years. Later in the year and on November 17th they took similar action on the death of another prominent citizen in the person of Joseph J. Kupsch who had originally served as Tax Collector and later on had served in various capacities in the municipal government.

As the year came to a close a second member of the Police Force, John Rhatican, submitted his resignation. He too had served almost 30 years as member of the Police Department. The resignation was accepted as of December 2nd.

## 1954

*Solidly Democratic for First Time in Years*

Mayor Popowski began his fifth year as Mayor on January 1st, 1954. In the preceding November he had

been elected for his third two year term. The organization candidates for Council, Fred C. Schmitt and Edward Engelhardt, had been defeated at the primaries by two independent Democrats Edwin J. Baumann and Joseph F. Ziemba. These nominees went on to win in the general election. The result was the replacement of the lone Republican Councilman Andrew Maliszewski. Once again the governing body was solidly Democratic for the first time in many years. Philip McCutcheon won reelection for a full term as Tax Assessor. Councilman Buchanan was selected as President of the Council. All municipal officials were reappointed without incident.

*Campaign Calls for Halt to Unrestricted Housing Developments*

The independent Councilmen had conducted their campaign by calling for a halt in the unrestricted housing development program which was then in full swing in the Borough. They pointed out that not only was the tax rate climbing but that it would climb much higher and faster when the full impact of the dozen or more housing developments then in progress of construction had its effect upon costs of construction and operation of the local school system.

*Boom Gives Borough Over 2,500 New Homes*

However, because the number of the housing developments were in various stages of approval and construction many of them were permitted to proceed to completion. Before the boom was over upwards of 2,500 homes had been built in the Borough. Under this policy of permitting programs which had been

started to be completed, Fenlon Homes, a development of over 50 homes in the Roses' Corner Section was approved on January 6th. In like manner Parkway Homes with approximately 115 housing units was approved on the same date. More than half of Laurel Park was yet to be constructed. These various sections were rushed through to final approval before the governing body changed its mind. Haven Village which had started out as a modest size development assigned its interest to a new group who completed the development under the name of Sayre Woods. Before this revised development was completed a total of some 370 homes were completed making it second only in size to the Laurel Park development.

The annual budget adopted in March amounted to $928,969.50. The tax rate was estimated at $5.72. The votes cast were estimated at 4,650.

In March the governing body awarded a contract to Meierjohan Wengler Co. of Cincinnati, Ohio, for 3 bronze tablets listing the names of the more than 1500 local men and women who had served in World War II.

*New Jersey Parkway Construction*

A collateral record in the local minutes indicating the construction of the N. J. Parkway through the eastern edge of the Borough was recorded on March 17th. The resolution provided for the conveyance by the Borough of 17 various parcels of Borough owned land acquired under tax foreclosure to the N. J. Highway Authority for approximately $30,000.

*Ordinances Regulate Bingo and Raffles—Other Items*

The adoption of a State Bingo and Raffle law was indicated in the minutes of the municipality on May 19th. On that date ordinances establishing local regulations for the conduct of bingo games and raffles were adopted.

On June 2nd the personnel of the Police Department was supplemented by the addition of six new patrolmen. These included Joseph Kilcommins, Edward Slesinski, Edward Boyler, Joseph Szatkowski, H. F. Buchanan and Ed. J. Wodarczyk.

*Stringent Amendments to Zoning and Sub-Division Ordinances Necessary*

On June 16th the governing body adopted stringent amendments to its Zoning and Sub-division ordinances. These imposed new and firmer regulations upon housing developments and their promoters. The minimum size of the building plots was substantially increased and the specifications for streets, curbs and sidewalks was strengthened and in various other ways essential regulations were imposed which had the effect of placing reasonable regulations upon these developers. The flood of housing developments ground slowly to a halt barely in time to save the Borough from a serious disruption in many of its essential municipal functions. Adequacy of water supplies, sufficiency of sewage facilities and sufficient school rooms and teaching staffs to accommodate the suddenly enlarged population was soon to confront the municipality. In the period from 1950 to 1957 the population more than doubled bringing it to well over 20,000.

*Borough Dedicates Another School Site*

At the year's end the Board of Education asked the Borough to deed them a 9 acre tract in the President Park Section for the construction of a new school. On December 1st Councilman Schussler sponsored a resolution dedicating a 9 acre tract acquired by the Borough through tax foreclosure for this purpose. The Board of Education subsequently built the Emma Arleth School on this tract.

*Prominent Men Die—Including Strek, Bernas and Keegan*

The year was marred by the death of a number of men prominent on the State, County and Local levels. James J. Smith, long a Director of the N. J. State League of Municipalities, died. Paul V. Murphy, publisher of the Perth Amboy Evening News was one of the men prominent in the life of Middlesex County who passed on during the year.

At the local level the Borough was saddened by the passing of Christopher Keegan, former patrolman, Stanley P. Bernas, local merchant and member of the Board of Education and John F. Strek who for 25 years had served the Borough as Superintendent of the Water Department.

## 1955

*Many Prominent Names Among Borough Appointees*

Mayor Popowski began his sixth year of service. In the preceding election Harold H. Boehm, independent Democrat had replaced Alex Loniewski. Council-

man Presnal was reelected for another term. The governing body was again solidly Democratic. Edwin J. Baumann was selected as Council President. There were no changes in the official appointments.

John J. Andrejewski, former Councilman, was elected Fire Chief for the Department. Edwin A. Kolodziej resigned from the Board of Adjustment and was succeeded by Richard Day. Joseph G. Gavel was appointed to the Planning Board.

Stanton Glynn, Frank Usczak and Frank Wodarczyk were appointed to the Board of Health.

The personnel of the Tax Department included Celia J. Wrobel, Chief Clerk, and Gertrude Kupsch and Frances Bochenski. Personnel of the Water Department included Rose Phillips, Cecelia Buczek and Jean Bailey.

Early in the year Sgt. Jacob Frischknecht applied for retirement after more than 30 years of service. Vincent Lasko was promoted to Sergeant and Richard Litz made a patrolman.

*Again Necessary to Expand Voting Districts*

On March 2nd the annual budget was adopted amounting to $1,003,608.00. The tax rate was estimated at $6.18. The registered vote had now climbed to over 8,000. The votes actually cast were tabulated at 5,425. Recognizing this sharp increase in population the governing body expanded the voting districts from 9 to 12.

*Tax Equalization Fight—Other Items*

At a special meeting on March 21st the long pending fight between the Borough and the Middlesex

County Tax Board came to a head. By sampling actual records of sales throughout the County, and calculating the purchase price from the documentary stamps, they determined that Sayreville was assessing its property at a ratio of less than 17% of true value. By the same method they determined that such cities as Perth Amboy and New Brunswick were allegedly assessing their properties at over 30% of true value. They proceeded to "equalize" the assessments. This resulted in a sharp increase in Sayreville's assessments and it likewise resulted in a sharp increase in the amount of County taxes paid by Sayreville. The governing body retained as special counsel the law firm of Toolan, Haney & Romond of Perth Amboy, headed by former Senator John E. Toolan, to fight the case. Although the matter was litigated through all the courts the equalization could not be upset. However, the contest did result in a revision of the methods of "equalization" in subsequent years considerably less harmful to the Borough.

On May 18th the office of Borough Electrician was created by ordinance and Andrew Thompson appointed to the post. At the same meeting a Resolution of Sympathy on the death of veteran Councilman J. Henry Boehm was adopted. It commemorated his more than 25 years of public service in various offices under both Township and Borough government.

*"Bayview Park" Created—Other Items*

On June 1st by resolution the governing body created "Bayview Park" in the Morgan Section of the Borough, at the request of the Bayview Lions Club. On June 15th the governing body found it necessary to regulate the "use and speed of motor boats" upon

the lakes and ponds of the Borough because of abuses which had become prevalent. On June 29th a Resolution of Sympathy was adopted on the death of Patrolman John Markulic.

*Suit Achieves New Deep Cut Bridge*

On July 20th the dispute between the Borough and the Pennsylvania Railroad over the conditions and adequacy of the Deep Cut Bridge which had been seething for more than almost 20 years came to a head. The governing body instructed Borough Attorney Karcher to file suit to compel the railroad to reconstruct same. This was the beginning of an involved litigation that was to extend from 1955 to 1958. However, it did result in the construction of a new and modern fireproof structure, without the Borough having to contribute to the cost of same. This brought an end to a narrow antiquated and dilapidated bridge of the horse and buggy era which had plagued the residents of the area and constituted an eyesore for many years.

*Death of Prominent Men Noted*

The minutes of the governing body took official notice of the passing of two men who were prominent on the State and County level. First of these was Elmer B. Boyd, Editor and Publisher of the Home News for many years. The second was the death by auto accident of Anthony J. Gadek, a Freeholder and former Commissioner of Perth Amboy for many years.

*Sayreville's First Shopping Centers*

The latter part of the summer and early fall marked

the coming of the first shopping center to Sayreville's perimeter. Bergen County investors acquired a site on State Highway Routes 4 and 9 opposite Coby's upon which they proposed to build a shopping center. Protest was filed by the Sayre Woods residents whose backyards abutted on the site. Meanwhile other interests had acquired the much larger site known as the Sayre Woods Shopping Center site just beyond the Sayreville border in Madison Township. Both shopping centers were built simultaneously and were put in operation early the following year.

*Charles P. Buchanan Retires*

The Mayor and Council paid tribute at its year end meeting on December 28th to Councilman Charles P. Buchanan who had retired from office after serving six three year terms or a total of 18 years. During this time he had also served as Democratic Municipal Chairman succeeding Frank Hartman, for a number of years.

## 1956

*Popowski Begins Fourth Term as Mayor*

Mayor Popowski was elected for his fourth term of office and began his seventh year as Chief Executive on January 1st, 1956.

J. Howard Kolb replaced Councilman Buchanan. Councilman Alfred W. Schussler, now Dean of the body, was reelected for another full term. Joseph Ziemba was elected as President of the Council. There were no changes in the official appointments, except for the addition of Joseph Lagoda as General Clerk.

Harold Brown replaced John J. Andrejewski as Chief of the Fire Department.

On February 15th the Borough terminated an extended controversy with the N. J. Highway Authority over damages allegedly caused by it to the old Morgan Plant Road by the acceptance of $9,500.

On March 7th the budget for the year amounting to $1,299,132.23 was adopted. The tax rate was estimated at $6.85; the registered vote at 9,694 and the votes cast at 8,643.

*Community Growth Makes*
*Municipal Building Inadequate*

Not only was the Borough growing by leaps and bounds as evidenced by the increased registration and voting but all departments of the Borough were also expanding as demands for increased municipal services mounted. At times the Borough Hall was the scene of several conflicting meetings with the governing body vieing with the Board of Health, Planning Board and Board of Adjustment for meeting facilities. Activities of the local Defense Council in the Municipal Court also increased apace. To meet the problem thus posed the Mayor and Council took action on March 7th. Murray Leibowitz, prominent Perth Amboy architect, was retained with instructions to design two additional wings for the municipal building. By the end of the year the plans and specifications were completed and approved and the work on the additions begun in the following year, 1957.

*New Playground—New Patrolmen—New Personnel*

On April 18th the DuPont Company leased a 4 acre

tract off Cheesequake Road to the Borough for playground purposes. This was intended to serve the almost 600 new families in the Laurel Park section.

On May 2nd six new patrolmen were appointed to the Police Department. They included Benjamin Boehm, Edward Rappleyea, Ronald Connors, James Guilfoyle, Stanley Swider and Francis Seaman.

On June 20th J. Frederik Ekstrom resigned as a member of the Board of Adjustment. He was succeeded by Joseph Kulas. Other changes in Borough personnel included the resignation of Edwin Kolodziej as Counsel to the Board of Adjustment and Planning Board and his replacement by Attorney William Gillen. The resignation of Charles N. McLean as a member of the Youth Guidance Committee and his replacement by John Klimek, and the appointment of Edwin Armstrong as Clerk to the Water Department and Eleanor Paprota as Assistant to the Borough Clerk.

*Guilfoyle Succeeds Kolb as Clerk—Other Items*

On March 21st Frank P. Kolb officially retired as Borough Clerk after more than 35 years continuous service in that office. He was lauded for his devotion to duty by the governing body and his fellow officials. Mary Guilfoyle was designated first as Deputy Clerk and later as regular Borough Clerk to fill the vacancy. This year marked the first legal test to be made of the tightened Zoning and Sub-division regulations. Reliance Associates applied for approval of a proposed housing development on certain acreage most of which was in Zone C designated Industrial and Mining. The request was refused. They instituted suit against the Borough. The Borough retained as Special Counsel to defend it the law firm of Wilentz, Goldman, Spitzer

and Sills, headed by former Attorney General David T. Wilentz. The suit was still pending and undetermined at this writing. On October 16th the Borough adopted a Resolution of Sympathy on the death of Thomas O. Thompson, former Councilman and former Mayor.

*Water Diversion Permit Renewed—*
*Voting Districts Increased*

On November 7th Borough Attorney Karcher reported that the N. J. Division of Water Policy and Supply had again renewed its grant to the Borough to permit it to divert 1½ million gallons of water per day from two wells to be sunk in the Bissett Tract for the purpose of enabling the Borough to develop its own water supply.

On December 27th the voting districts in the Borough were increased from 12 to 14 to meet the greatly expanded population which now approximated 20,000. At the closing meeting of the year on December 27th tribute was paid by the Mayor and Council to retiring Councilman Edwin J. Baumann. He was lauded as a devoted and conscientious public servant who had extended his best efforts on behalf of the Borough and its people during his incumbency.

## 1957

*Eighth Year as Chief Executive*

1957 was Mayor Popowski's eighth year of service as Chief Executive. In the preceding election Councilman Joseph Ziemba had been reelected for a second term and Edward F. Fielek had been elected to his first

term. Mr. Fielek succeeded Edwin J. Baumann. The holdover Councilmen were Harold Boehm, J. Howard Kolb, Raymond Presnal and Alfred W. Schussler. There were no important changes in the official appointments.

The Mayor's Eighth Annual Message contained a comprehensive review of the accomplishments of the past year and of the program he hoped to put into effect in the current year. Included in his recommendations was construction of a modern incinerator; improved street lighting; elevation of the causeway approximately 3 feet by the county and the creation of an additional entrance for southbound traffic on the Garden State Parkway near Rose's Corner.

*Borough Engineer Killed in Automobile Accident—Other Items*

On January 16th a resolution of sympathy was adopted on the death of Borough Engineer Karl H. Wilber. He had served the community as Borough Engineer for more than 21 years and had just been reappointed. His death was due to injuries sustained in an automobile accident a few days earlier. He was an engineer of unusual ability and the municipality suffered a severe loss in his death.

At the same meeting the Borough was advised of the state's willingness to contribute $12,500. toward its share of the cost of protection against storm erosion along the Bay's shore at the Morgan Section. This was later increased to a total of $50,000.

At the February 14th meeting the Borough took official notice of the death of former Councilman Alex Loniewski. He had not only served the Borough as

Councilman, but as a member of the Planning Board and was a local building contractor for many years.

*Contracts Awarded for Two Additional Wings to Municipal Building*

On February 20th actual contracts for two additional wings to the Municipal Building were awarded. The General Contractor was Leo Matzner at $184,-750. The remaining four subcontracts totalled $117,-976. or a total of $302,726. At the same meeting the Mayor made a written report containing 40 suggestions for Planning Board projects. These were subsequently referred to the Planning Board for study and action.

*Population Soars to 20195*

On March 6th the Annual Budget for the year of $1,681,998.00 was adopted. At the same meeting the governing body was advised that the census conducted by the local Board of Education indicated that the present population of the Borough was 20,195.

On March 20th Borough Attorney Karcher advised the governing body that the Appellate Division of the Superior Court had decided in favor of the Borough in the Deep Cut Bridge case. The effect of the decision was to require the Railroad to pay the entire cost of the reconstruction.

*Consulting Engineer for Three Special Projects*

On June 5th the Borough was still without a regular Borough Engineer. In the absence of a Borough Engineer Charles J. Kupper was retained as Consulting

Engineer for three special projects. These included a survey of the water system, a survey of the sewer system and preparation of working plans and specifications to cover the construction of the Borough's own water supply system.

This action was followed up on July 3rd by the adoption of a bond ordinance for $390,000. to cover the cost of the Borough's own water works.

*Filled in Land to Become Public Park*

In August the Borough adopted a resolution declaring its intention to dedicate and develop its share of the filled in land along the coast line abutting the Morgan Section, as a public park. The United States Army Engineers had created some 60 additional acres of land by means of dredging a deeper channel for the anchoring of ocean going vessels at the mouth of the Raritan River and Kill Van Kull opposite Morgan.

On the same date a contract covering the sinking of the first wells in Sayreville's water system was let at a cost of $18,700. to A. C. Schultes & Son.

*Philip Farley, Jr., Dies*

On August 21st a resolution of sympathy was adopted on the death of Philip Farley, Jr. He had served under the old Township form of government as both a Township Committeeman and Township Clerk.

*Emma L. Arleth School Dedicated*

The Mayor and Council were invited to attend the Dedication Ceremony at the opening of the new Emma L. Arleth School, to be held on August 31, 1957. This

was the second new school building the Borough had been required to build within a few years to meet its rapidly expanding population. The governing body had furnished the building site to the Board of Education, in both cases.

On September 4th Herman Moselowitz of New Brunswick was appointed Borough Engineer for the balance of the year to fill the vacancy caused by the death of Karl H. Wilber.

*Construction Begun on New Deep Cut Bridge*

On September 18th the official minutes disclose the actual beginning of the work of demolishing the old Deep Cut Bridge and the beginning of construction on the new one. This was in the form of a resolution consenting to the blocking of traffic on Washington Road and the detouring of same via Ernston Road and via Raritan Street, Mechanicsville.

*Numerous Projects Reach Climax*

As the year neared its end many of the projects that had been in the state of development for some time reached their climax. Middlesex County notified the Borough it would contribute $50,000. as its share toward the elimination of the drainage problem in the Ernston-Washington Road area. The Borough promptly adopted a resolution directing the Borough Engineer to proceed with design sketches and plans and specifications covering this work. Reports on the Test Wells sunk in connection with the Borough's water system indicated that the Bissett Tract alone would be inadequate to furnish the water required. Plans were immediately laid for the acquisition of an

additional 50 or 100 acres adjacent to the Bissett Tract. Application was made to the state to modify its diversion order to include the additional acreage.

By this time, although the Deep Cut Bridge was being reconstructed, the litigation had reached the Supreme Court, had been argued once and was scheduled for reargumentation early in 1958.

The two new wings on the Borough Hall were rapidly nearing completion. Sessions of the governing body were scheduled to be held in the new wing beginning January 1, 1958.

*Master Plan to be Compiled*

Probably one of the most significant developments in the community's history occurred in the latter part of 1957. Application was made for federal-state aid in the preparation of a Master Plan which would guide the future development of the Borough along logical lines. The application was approved and the firm of Community Planners Inc. of Princeton, headed by Herbert Smith, was formally retained for the purpose of making the necessary studies and compiling the Master Plan and report. It is safe to say that this action will have far reaching and beneficial effects upon the future growth and development of the Borough of Sayreville.

*Sayreville and County Lose Devoted Public Official*

The Borough was saddened at the year's end by the death of one of its most prominent and devoted citizens. Thomas F. Dolan, with a distinguished record of public service, died after a brief illness. He had served successively as Postmaster, Councilman, Mayor for 10 years and a member of the Board of Chosen Freeholders of Middlesex County for 21 years. He had also been an officer and director of many local and nearby financial, civic and fraternal organizations.

# A MUNICIPAL HISTORY OF THE BOROUGH OF SAYREVILLE

". . . In it I endeavor to pick up the threads where the Township went out of existence and the Borough was born. In the following pages is a fairly accurate and authentic digest or synopsis of events abstracted from the official minutes and other records of the municipality. . . ."

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"I know of no one better qualified for the task of writing a Municipal history of the Borough of Sayreville than the author. While somewhat younger than I, he has spent almost thirty years of his very active life in one form or another of public service at practically all levels of government. These include service as local Magistrate or Judge of the Police Court; Borough Attorney; Deputy Surrogate of Middlesex County and three years' service in the State Legislature."